PRESIDENT'S SECRETARIAT

(LIBRARY)

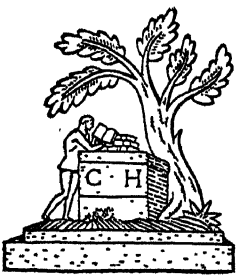
Accn. No..... Class No.....

The book should be returned on or before the date last stamped below.

THE WISDOM OF INDIA

THE WISDOM OF INDIA

EDITED BY LIN YUTANG



CARLTON HOUSE • NEW YORK

COPYRIGHT, 1942, BY RANDOM HOUSE, INC.

MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

WE WISH to acknowledge our indebtedness to the following publishers for their courtesy in granting permission to reprint sections of books issued and copyrighted by them:

"The Sermon at Benares," the "Sermon on Abuse" and the legends, "The Marriage Feast in Jambunada," "Kisa Gotami," and "Following the Master over the Stream," copyrighted and published by The Open Court Publishing Company, La Salle, Illinois.

Selections from *The Panchatantra,* translated by Arthur W. Ryder, and copyrighted and published by The University of Chicago Press.

Other acknowledgments have been made in the individual introductions.

Contents

INDIAN PIETY

Hymns from the Rigveda
Introduction 11
To Indra 14
The Song of Creation 15
To Prajapati 16
To Varuna 17
To Varuna 19
To Visvakarman 20
To Indra 21
Hymn of Man 23
To Liberality 25
To Faith 26
To Night 27
To Dawn 27

The Upanishads
Introduction 31
The Story of the Creation 34
The Subtle Essence 38
The True Brahman 40
Emancipation 41
The Conquest of Death 42
The One God 46
The Immanence of God 48
God Is Within You 50
Know God 51

The Lord's Song (The Bhagavad-Gita)
Introduction 54
The Blessed Lord's Song 57
The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali
Introduction 115
Concentration: Its Spiritual Uses 120
Concentration: Its Practice 123
Powers 127
Independence 130

INDIAN IMAGINATION

The Ramayana
Introduction 135
Book I Sita-Swayamvara 141
Book II Vana-Gamana-Adesa 151
Book III Dasa-Ratha-Viyoga 166
Book IV Rama-Bharata-Sambada 183
Book V Panchavati 193
Book VI Sita-Harana 201
Book VII Kishkindha 212
Book VIII Sita-Sandesa 221
Book IX Ravana-Sabha 227
Book X Yuddha 234
Book XI Rajya-Abhisheka 250
Book XII Aswa-Medha 257

INDIAN HUMOR

The Fables of Panchatantra
Introduction 265
Introduction to the Stories 270
The Frogs That Rode Snakeback 272
The Unforgiving Monkey 273
The Lion-Makers 276
Mouse-Maid Made Mouse 277
The Duel Between Elephant and Sparrow 280
The Heron That Liked Crabmeat 281
The Unteachable Monkey 283
The Brahman's Goat 284
The Snake in the Prince's Belly 285
The Gullible Husband 287
The Butter-Blinded Brahman 289
The Brahman, the Thief and the Ghost 290

The Loyal Mungoose 291
The Mice That Set Elephants Free 292
The Ass in the Tiger-Skin 293
The Farmer's Wife 294
The Brahman's Dream 295
Shell-Neck, Slim, and Grim 296
The Enchanted Parrot
Introduction 297
Yasodevi and Her Transmigrations 300
The Queen and the Laughing Fish 301
The Son of Promise 309
Devīka and Her Foolish Husband 313
The Lady and the Tiger 314
The Concluding Story 315

BUDDHISM

The Dhammapada
Introduction 321
The Dhammapada 327
Three Sermons by Buddha
Introduction 357
The Sermon at Benares 359
The Sermon on Abuse 362
The Fire Sermon 363
Some Buddhist Parables and Legends
Introduction 365
Kisa Gotami 367
The Marriage-Feast in Jambunada 369
Following the Master over the Stream 370
The Greedy Monk 371
A Courtesan Tempts the Monk Ocean-of-Beauty 373

INDIAN PIETY

Hymns from the Rigveda

INTRODUCTION

INDIA IS A LAND and a people intoxicated with God. This is the impression of anyone who reads through the Hymns from the *Rigveda,* and follows through the *Upanishads* to the arrival of Buddha in 563 B.C. The Hindu preoccupation with questions of the world soul and the individual soul is so intense that at times it must seem oppressive to a less spiritual people. I doubt there is a nation on earth that equals the Hindus in religious emotional intensity except the Jews. It is therefore entirely natural that we find the earliest creation of the Hindu spirit assumed a form and passion very similar to the Psalms of the Old Testament.

Max Müller has called the *Rigveda* (*rig* means "verse" and *veda* means "knowledge," the title meaning "songs of spiritual knowledge") "the first word spoken by the Aryan man." The *Vedas* cover ten books and 1,028 hymns. In point of antiquity, the earliest of the *Vedas* probably went as far back as 1,500 or 1,200 B.C., covering eight centuries of development, during which they grew to their present form. Throughout this development and down to present-day Hinduism, we see this preoccupation with God and the mystic conception of the universe. Hindus are natural mystics, mysticism meaning a form of religion aiming at achieving direct union with God. To achieve the union of the individual soul (*atman*) with the world soul (*brahma*) behind all things may be said to be the whole effort of the Vedic philosophy.

In these Hymns one sees, at the very birth of this religious spirit, such utterances expressing an awakening of man's soul and sense of wonder and doubt and intellectual inquiry, in such characteristic fashion like something that hits one in the eye. It may sound frivolous, yet pro-

foundly true, to say that Hindu intoxication with God began with the drink of the soma-juice, a fermented drink from the soma-plant, used in Vedic rituals. For, says the early Hindu poet:

Not as a mote within the eye count the five tribes of men with me:
Have I not drunk of soma-juice?

The heavens and earth themselves have not grown equal to half of me:
Have I not drunk of soma-juice?

I in my grandeur have surpassed the heavens and all this spacious earth:
Have I not drunk of soma-juice?

Aha! this spacious earth will I deposit either here or there:
Have I not drunk of soma-juice?

One of my flanks is in the sky: I let the other trail below:
Have I not drunk of soma-juice?

The case for intoxication with God is therefore established. And readers may well regard these Hymns as the first cocktail sips of the Hindu religious philosophy.

The suggestion of similarity with the Psalms is inevitable, when one reads lines like the following, in the able version by Ralph T. H. Griffith:

Far from me, Varuna, remove all danger: accept me graciously, thou holy sovran.
Cast off, like cords that hold a calf, my troubles: I am not even mine eyelid's lord without thee.

O mighty Varuna, now and hereafter, even as of old, will we speak forth thy worship.
For in thyself, invincible god, thy statutes ne'er to be moved as fixed as on a mountain. (To Varuna)

Or listen to the first fervent cry of joy at the glories of the sunrise at dawn:

Bright leader of glad sounds, our eyes behold her: splendid in hue she hath unclosed the portals.
She, stirring up the world, hath shown us riches; Dawn hath awakened every living creature.

Dawns giving sons all heroes, kine and horses, shining upon the man who brings oblations—

These let the soma-presser gain when ending his glad songs louder than the voices of Vayu. (To Dawn)

Equally reminiscent of the Psalms are the Hymns to Indra, the "fierce god":

He who hath smitten, ere they knew their danger, with his hurled weapon many grievous sinners;

Who pardons not his boldness who provokes him, who slays the Dasyu, he, O men, is Indra.

Even the heaven and earth bow down before him, before his very breath the mountains tremble.

Known as the soma-drinker, armed with thunder, who wields the bolt, he, O men, is Indra. (To Indra)

And the sense of intellectual inquiry and doubt naturally followed the sense of wonder and worship:

What was the tree, what wood in sooth produced it, from which they fashioned out the earth and heaven?

Ye thoughtful men inquire within your spirit whereon he stood when he established all things. (To Visvakarman)

Skepticism arose at the end of the "Song of Creation":

He, the first origin of this creation, whether he formed it all or did not form it,

Whose eye controls this world in highest heaven, he verily knows it, or perhaps he knows not.

And so on, until in the Hymn to Prajapati (the Creator), which Max Müller has entitled "To the Unknown god," the Vedic poet in ten successive verses asks the question, "What god shall we adore with our oblation?"

I notice among certain European students of Hinduism the constant insinuation of polytheism with a tone of reproach. That Hindu monotheism developed in the *Upanishads* with the Vedanta belief in the One behind all things is a minor point. It is my belief that it is entirely unimportant what god one worships, monotheistic or polytheistic; what is important is that belief should produce the true spirit of devotion in the life of the worshipper. In modern terms, what is important is that religion be "efficient," that is, that it produce results, and I may say that modern monotheism is less efficient than when men believed in the spirituality of trees and rocks, and mountains and rivers.

Hymns from the Rigveda

Translated by Ralph J. H. Griffith

TO INDRA[1]

THIS, even this was my resolve, to win a cow, to win a steed:
Have I not drunk of soma-juice?

Like violent gusts of wind the draughts that I have drunk have lifted me:
Have I not drunk of soma-juice?

The draughts I drank have borne me up, as fleet-foot horses draw a car:
Have I not drunk of soma-juice?

The hymn hath reached me, like a cow who lows to meet her darling calf:
Have I not drunk of soma-juice?

As a wright bends a chariot-seat, so round my heart I bend the hymn:
Have I not drunk of soma-juice?

Not as a mote within the eye count the five tribes of men with me:
Have I not drunk of soma-juice?

The heavens and earth themselves have not grown equal to one half of me:
Have I not drunk of soma-juice?

[1] The favorite national deity of the Vedic age. He hurls thunderbolts.

I in my grandeur have surpassed the heavens and all this spacious earth:
Have I not drunk of soma-juice?

Aha! this spacious earth will I deposit either here or there:
Have I not drunk of soma-juice?

In one short moment will I smite the earth in fury here or there:
Have I not drunk of soma-juice?

One of my flanks is in the sky; I let the other trail below:
Have I not drunk of soma-juice?

I, greatest of the mighty ones, am lifted to the firmament:
Have I not drunk of soma-juice?

I seek the worshipper's abode; oblation-bearer to the gods:
Have I not drunk of soma-juice? (*Book X, 119*)

THE SONG OF CREATION

THEN was not non-existent nor existent: there was no realm of air, no sky beyond it.
What covered in, and where? and what gave shelter? Was water there, unfathomed depth of water?

Death was not then, nor was there aught immortal: no sign was there, the day's and night's divider.
That one thing, breathless, breathed by its own nature: apart from it was nothing whatsoever.

Darkness there was: at first concealed in darkness, this All was indiscriminated chaos.
All that existed then was void and formless: by the great power of warmth was born that unit.

Thereafter rose desire in the beginning, Desire, the primal seed and germ of spirit.
Sages who searched with their heart's thought discovered the existent's kinship in the non-existent.

Transversely was their severing line extended: what was above it then,
and what below it?
There were begetters, there were mighty forces, free action here and
energy up yonder.

Who verily knows and who can here declare it, whence it was born and
whence comes this creation?
The gods are later than this world's production. Who knows, then,
whence it first came into being?

He, the first origin of this creation, whether he formed it all or did not
form it,
Whose eye controls this world in highest heaven, he verily knows it,
or perhaps he knows not. (*Book X, 129*)

TO PRAJĀPATI[1]

In the beginning rose Hiranyagarbha,[2] born only lord of all created
beings.
He fixed and holdeth up this earth and heaven. What god shall we adore
with our oblation?

Giver of vital breath, of power and vigour, he whose commandments all
the gods acknowledge:
The lord of death, whose shade is life immortal. What god shall we adore
with our oblation?

Who by his grandeur hath become sole ruler of all the moving world
that breathes and slumbers:
He who is lord of men and lord of cattle. What god shall we adore with
our oblation?

His, through his might, are these snow-covered mountains, and men call
sea and Rasā[3] his possession:
His arms are these, his are these heavenly regions. What god shall we
adore with our oblation?

[1] The Creator, ruler of the universe.
[2] *Hiranyagarbha:* the sun-god.
[3] *Rasā,* the mythical river of the firmament.

By him the heavens are strong and earth is stedfast, by him light's realm and sky-vault are supported:
By him the regions in mid-air were measured. What god shall we adore with our oblation?

To him, supported by his help, two armies embattled look with trembling in their spirit,
When over them the risen sun is shining. What god shall we adore with our oblation?

What time the mighty waters came, containing the universal germ, producing Agni,[1]
Thence sprang the god's one spirit into being. What god shall we adore with our oblation?

He in his might surveyed the floods containing productive force and generating worship.
He is the god of gods, and none beside him. What god shall we adore with our oblation?

Ne'er may he harm us who is earth's begetter, nor he whose laws are sure, the heavens' creator,
He who brought forth the great and lucid waters. What god shall we adore with our oblation?

Prajāpati! thou only comprehendest all these created things, and none beside thee.
Grant us our hearts' desire when we invoke thee: may we have store of riches in possession. (*Book X, 121*)

TO VARUNA[2]

This laud of the self-radiant wise Aditya[3] shall be supreme o'er all that is in greatness.
I beg renown of Varuna the mighty, the god exceeding kind to him who worships.

[1] The god of fire and light.
[2] King of air and sea.
[3] Son of Aditi. Both Varuna and the Sun are Adityas.

Having extolled thee, Varuna, with thoughtful care may we have high fortune in thy service.
Singing thy praises like the fires at coming, day after day, of mornings rich in cattle.

May we be in thy keeping, O thou leader, wide ruling Varuna, Lord of many heroes.
O sons of Aditi, for ever faithful, pardon us, gods, admit us to your friendship.

He made them flow, the Aditya, the sustainer: the rivers run by Varuna's commandment.
These feel no weariness, nor cease from flowing: swift have they flown like birds in air around us.

Loose me from sin as from a band that binds me: may we swell, Varuna, thy spring of order.
Let not my thread, while I weave song, be severed, nor my work's sum, before the time, be shattered.

Far from me, Varuna, remove all danger: accept me graciously, thou holy sovran.
Cast off, like cords that hold a calf, my troubles: I am not even mine eyelid's lord without thee.

Strike us not, Varuna, with those dread weapons which, Asura, at thy bidding wound the sinner.
Let us not pass away from light to exile. Scatter, that we may live, the men who hate us.

O mighty Varuna, now and hereafter, even as of old, will we speak forth our worship.
For in thyself, invincible god, thy statutes ne'er to be moved are fixed as on a mountain.

Move far from me what sins I have committed: let me not suffer, King, for guilt of others.
Full many a morn remains to dawn upon us: in these, O Varuna, while we live direct us.

O King, whoever, be he friend or kinsman, hath threatened me affrighted in my slumber—
If any wolf or robber fain would harm us, therefrom, O Varuna, give thou us protection.

May I not live, O Varuna, to witness my wealthy, liberal, dear friend's destitution.
King, may I never lack well-ordered riches. Loud may we speak with heroes in assembly. (*Book II, 28*)

TO VARUNA

SING forth a hymn sublime and solemn, grateful to glorious Varuna, imperial ruler,
Who hath struck out, like one who slays the victim, earth as a skin to spread in front of Sūrya.[1]

In the tree-tops the air he hath extended, put milk in kine and vigorous speed in horses,
Set intellect in hearts, fire in the waters, Sūrya in heaven and Soma on the mountain.

Varuna lets the big cask, opening downward, flow through the heaven and earth and air's mid-region.
Therewith the universe's sovran waters earth as the shower of rain bedews the barley.

When Varuna is fain for milk, he moistens the sky, the land, and earth to her foundation.
Then straight the mountains clothe them in the raincloud: the heroes, putting forth their vigour, loose them.

I will declare this mighty deed of magic, of glorious Varuna, the lord immortal,
Who, standing in the firmament, hath meted the earth out with the sun as with a measure.

[1] The Sun God.

None, verily, hath ever let or hindered this the most wise god's mighty deed of magic,
Whereby with all their flood, the lucid rivers fill not one sea wherein they pour their waters.

If we have sinned against the man who loves us, have ever wronged a brother, friend, or comrade,
The neighbour ever with us, or a stranger, O Varuna, remove from us the trespass.

If we, as gamesters cheat at play, have cheated, done wrong unwittingly or sinned of purpose,
Cast all these sins away like loosened fetters, and, Varuna, let us be thine own beloved. (*Book V, 85*)

TO VISVAKARMAN[1]

He who sate down as Hotar-priest,[2] the Rishi,[3] our father, offering up all things existing—
He, seeking through his wish a great possession, came among men on earth as archetypal.

What was the place whereon he took his station? What was it that supported him? How was it?
Whence Visvakarman, seeing all, producing the earth, with mighty power disclosed the heavens.

He who hath eyes on all sides round about him, a mouth on all sides, arms and feet on all sides,
He, the sole god, producing earth and heaven, weldeth them, with his arms as wings, together.

What was the tree, what wood in sooth produced it, from which they fashioned out the earth and heaven?
Ye thoughtful men inquire within your spirit whereon he stood when he established all things.

[1] Visvakarman is represented in this hymn as the creator of all things and architect of the worlds.
[2] The priest who invokes the gods to receive the offerings.
[3] A saint, anchorite, a term commonly used.

Thine highest, lowest, sacrificial natures and these thy midmost here, O Visvakarman,
Teach thou thy friends at sacrifice, O Blessed, and come thyself, exalted, to our worship.

Bring thou thyself, exalted with oblation, O Visvakarman, earth and heaven to worship.
Let other men around us live in folly: here let us have a rich and liberal patron.

Let us invoke to-day, to aid our labour, the lord of speech, the thought-swift Visvakarman.
May he hear kindly all our invocations who gives all bliss for aid, whose works are righteous. (*Book X, 81*)

TO INDRA

He who, just born, chief god of lofty spirit by power and might became the gods' protector,
Before whose breath through greatness of his valour the two worlds trembled, he, O men, is Indra.

He who fixed fast and firm the earth that staggered, and set at rest the agitated mountains,
Who measured out the air's wide middle region and gave the heaven support, he, men, is Indra.

Who slew the dragon, freed the seven rivers, and drove the kine forth from the cave of Vala,
Begat the fire between two stones, the spoiler in warrior's battle, he, O men, is Indra.

By whom this universe was made to tremble, who chased away the humbled brood of demons,
Who, like a gambler gathering his winnings, seized the foe's riches, he, O men, is Indra.

Of whom, the terrible, they ask, Where is he? or verily they say of him, He is not.
He sweeps away, like birds, the foe's possessions. Have faith in him, for he, O men, is Indra.

Stirrer to action of the poor and lowly, of priest, of suppliant who sings his praises;
Who, fair-faced, favours him who presses soma with stones made ready, he, O men, is Indra.

He under whose supreme control are horses, all chariots, and the villages, and cattle;
He who gave being to the sun and morning, who leads the waters, he, O men, is Indra.

To whom two armies cry in close encounter, both enemies the stronger and the weaker;
Whom two invoke upon one chariot mounted, each for himself, he, O ye men, is Indra.

Without whose help our people never conquer; whom, battling, they invoke to give them succour;
He of whom all this world is but the copy, who shakes things moveless, he, O men, is Indra.

He who hath smitten, ere they knew their danger, with his hurled weapon many grievous sinners;
Who pardons not his boldness who provokes him, who slays the Dasyu, he, O men, is Indra.

He who discovered in the fortieth autumn Sambara as he dwelt among the mountains;
Who slew the dragon putting forth his vigour, the demon lying there, he, men, is Indra.

Who with seven guiding reins, the bull, the mighty, set free the seven great floods to flow at pleasure;
Who, thunder-armed, rent Rauhina [2] in pieces when scaling heaven, he, O ye men, is Indra.

[2] A demon of drought.

Even the heaven and earth bow down before him, before his very breath the mountains tremble.
Known as the soma-drinker, armed with thunder, who wields the bolt, he, O ye men, is Indra.

Who aids with favour him who pours the soma and him who brews it, sacrificer, singer,
Whom prayer exalts, and pouring forth of soma, and this our gift, he, O ye men, is Indra.

Thou verily art fierce and true who sendest strength to the man who brews and pours libation.
So may we evermore, thy friends, O Indra, speak loudly to the synod with our heroes. (*Book II, 12*)

HYMN OF MAN

A THOUSAND heads hath Purusha,[1] a thousand eyes, a thousand feet.
On every side pervading earth he fills a space ten fingers wide.

This Purusha is all that yet hath been and all that is to be,
The lord of immortality which waxes greater still by food.

So mighty is his greatness; yea, greater than this is Purusha.
All creatures are one-fourth of him, three-fourths eternal life in heaven.

With three-fourths Purusha went up: one-fourth of him again was here.
Thence he strode out to every side over what eats not and what eats.

From him Virāj[2] was born; again Purusha from Virāj was born.
As soon as he was born he spread eastward and westward o'er the earth.

[1] *Purusha,* embodied spirit, or man personified and regarded as the soul and original source of the universe, the personal and life-giving principle in all animated beings, is said to have a *thousand,* that is innumerable, *heads, eyes, and feet,* as being one with all created life. *A space ten fingers wide:* the region of the heart of man, wherein the soul was supposed to reside. Although as the universal soul he pervades the universe, as the individual soul he is enclosed in a space of narrow dimensions.
[2] One of the sources of existence.

When gods prepared the sacrifice with Purusha as their offering,
Its oil was spring; the holy gift was autumn; summer was the wood.

They balmed as victim on the grass Purusha born in earliest time.
With him the deities and all Sādhyas [1] and Rishis sacrificed.

From that great general sacrifice the dripping fat was gathered up.
He formed the creatures of the air, and animals both wild and tame.

From that great general sacrifice Richas and Sāma-hymns were born:
Therefrom were spells and charms produced; the Yajus had its birth from it.

From it were horses born, from it all cattle with two rows of teeth:
From it were generated kine, from it the goats and sheep were born.

When they divided Purusha, how many portions did they make?
What do they call his mouth, his arms? What do they call his thighs and feet?

The Brāhman [2] was his mouth, of both his arms was the Rājanya [3] made.
His thighs became the Vaisya,[4] from his feet the Sudra [5] was produced.

The moon was gendered from his mind, and from his eye the sun had birth;
Indra and Agni from his mouth were born, and Vāyu [6] from his breath.

Forth from his navel came mid-air; the sky was fashioned from his head;
Earth from his feet, and from his ear the regions. Thus they formed the worlds.

Seven fencing-sticks had he, thrice seven layers of fuel were prepared,
When the gods, offering sacrifice, bound, as their victim, Purusha.

[1] Celestial beings.
[2] The first caste of Brahman priests.
[3] The second caste of kings.
[4] The third caste of traders.
[5] The fourth caste of laborers.
[6] God of Wind.

Gods, sacrificing, sacrificed the victim: these were the earliest holy ordinances.
The mighty ones attained the height of heaven, there where the Sādhyas, gods of old, are dwelling. (*Book X, 90*)

TO LIBERALITY

THE gods have not ordained hunger to be our death: even to the well-fed man comes death in varied shape.
The riches of the liberal never waste away, while he who will not give finds none to comfort him.

The man with food in store who, when the needy comes in miserable case begging for bread to eat,
Hardens his heart against him—even when of old he did him service—finds not one to comfort him.

Bounteous is he who gives unto the beggar who comes to him in want of food and feeble.
Success attends him in the shout of battle. He makes a friend of him in future troubles.

No friend is he who to his friend and comrade who comes imploring food, will offer nothing.
Let him depart—no home is that to rest in—and rather seek a stranger to support him.

Let the rich satisfy the poor implorer, and bend his eye upon a longer pathway.
Riches come now to one, now to another, and like the wheels of cars are ever rolling.

The foolish man wins food with fruitless labour: that food—I speak the truth—shall be his ruin.
He feeds no trusty friend, no man to love him. All guilt is he who eats with no partaker.

The ploughshares ploughing makes the food that feeds us, and with its feet cuts through the path it follows.
Better the speaking than the silent Brāhman: the liberal friend outvalues him who gives not.

He with one foot hath far outrun the biped, and the two-footed catches the three-footed.
Four-footed creatures come when bipeds call them, and stand and look where five are met together.

The hands are both alike: their labour differs. The yield of sister milch-kine is unequal.
Twins even differ in their strength and vigour: two, even kinsmen, differ in their bounty. (*Book X, 117*)

TO FAITH

By faith is Agni kindled, through faith is oblation offered up.
We celebrate with praises faith upon the height of happiness.

Bless thou the man who gives, O Faith; Faith, bless the man who fain would give.
Bless thou the liberal worshippers; bless thou the word that I have said.

Even as the deities maintained faith in the mighty Asuras,[1]
So make this uttered wish of mine true for the liberal worshippers.

Guarded by Vāyu, gods and men who sacrifice draw near to faith.
Man winneth faith by yearnings of the heart, and opulence by faith.

Faith in the early morning, Faith at noonday will we invocate,
Faith at the setting of the sun. O Faith, endow us with belief.

(*Book X, 151*)

[1] Primeval Aryan gods, later believed as demons working against God.

TO NIGHT

With all her eyes the goddess Night looks forth approaching many a spot:
She hath put all her glories on.

Immortal, she hath filled the waste, the goddess hath filled height and depth:
She conquers darkness with her light.

The goddess as she comes hath set the Dawn her sister in her place:
And then the darkness vanishes.

So favour us this night, O thou whose pathways we have visited
As birds their nest upon the tree.

The villagers have sought their homes, and all that walks and all that flies,
Even the falcons fain for prey.

Keep off the she-wolf and the wolf; O Ūrmya,[1] keep the thief away:
Easy be thou for us to pass.

Clearly hath she come nigh to me who decks the dark with richest hues:
O morning, cancel it like debts.

These have I brought to thee like kine. O Night, thou child of heaven, accept
This laud as for a conqueror. (*Book X. 127*)

TO DAWN

This light is come, amid all lights the fairest; born is the brilliant, far-extending brightness.
Night, sent away for Savitar's[2] uprising, hath yielded up a birthplace for the morning.

[1] Epithet for "night" personified.
[2] *Savitar:* the sun, the life-giver.

The fair, the bright is come with her white offspring; to her the dark one hath resigned her dwelling.
Akin, immortal, following each other, changing their colours, both the heavens move onward.

Common, unending is the sisters' pathway: taught by the gods, alternately they travel.
Fair-formed, of different hues and yet one-minded, Night and Dawn clash not, neither do they tarry.

Bright leader of glad sounds, our eyes behold her: splendid in hue she hath unclosed the portals.
She, stirring up the world, hath shown us riches: Dawn hath awakened every living creature.

Rich Dawn, she sets afoot the coiled-up sleeper, one for enjoyment, one for wealth or worship,
Those who saw little for extended vision: all living creatures hath the Dawn awakened.

One to high sway, one to exalted glory, one to pursue his gain and one his labour;
All to regard their different vocations, all moving creatures hath the Dawn awakened.

We see her there, the child of heaven, apparent, the young maid, flushing in her shining raiment.
Thou sovran lady of all earthly treasure, flush on us here, auspicious Dawn, this morning.

She, first of endless morns to come hereafter, follows the path of morns that have departed.
Dawn, at her rising, urges forth the living: him who is dead she wakes not from his slumber.

As thou, Dawn, hast caused Agni to be kindled, and with the sun's eye hast revealed creation,
And hast awakened men to offer worship, thou hast performed, for gods, a noble service.

How long a time, and they shall be together.—Dawns that have shone and dawns to shine hereafter?
She yearns for former dawns with eager longing, and goes forth gladly shining with the others.

Gone are the men who in the days before us looked on the rising of the earlier morning.
We, we the living, now behold her brightness, and they come nigh who shall hereafter see her.

Foe-chaser, born of Law, the law's protectress, joy-giver, waker of all pleasant voices,
Auspicious, bringing food for gods' enjoyment, shine on us here, most bright, O Dawn, this morning.

From days eternal hath Dawn shone, the goddess, and shows this light to-day, endowed with riches.
So will she shine on days to come; immortal she moves on in her own strength, undecaying.

In the sky's borders hath she shone in splendour: the goddess hath thrown off the veil of darkness.
Awakening the world with purple horses, on her well-harnessed chariot Dawn approaches.

Bringing all life-sustaining blessings with her, showing herself, she sends forth brilliant lustre.
Last of the countless mornings that have vanished, first of bright morns to come hath Dawn arisen.

Arise! the breath, the life, again hath reached us: darkness hath passed away, and light approacheth.
She for the sun hath left a path to travel: we have arrived where men prolong existence.

Singing the praises of refulgent mornings with his hymn's web, the priest, the poet, rises.
Shine then to-day, rich maid, on him who lauds thee, shine down on us the gift of life and offspring.

Dawns giving sons all heroes, kine and horses, shining upon the man who brings oblations—
These let the soma-presser gain when ending his glad songs louder than the voice of Vāyu.

Mother of gods, Āditi's form of glory, ensign of sacrifice, shine forth exalted.
Rise up, bestowing praise on our devotion: all-bounteous, make us chief among the people.

Whatever splendid wealth the dawns bring with them to bless the man who offers praise and worship,
Even that may Mitra, Varuna vouchsafe us, and Āditi[1] and Sindhu,[2] earth and heaven. (*Book I, 113*)

[1] The Infinite.
[2] The Indus, or any great river.

The Upanishads

INTRODUCTION

SCHOPENHAUER IS CREDITED to have read a Latin translation of a Persian translation of the *Upanishads,* which influenced his philosophic speculations about the world as will and as idea, and I trust many English readers hear of the *Upanishads* in connection with Schopenhauer, if not with Emerson. The age of "Brahmin" transcendentalism has passed, yet W. B. Yeats, George Russell and a number of contemporary poets seem to entertain a curiosity about what is contained in the mystic-metaphysical view of man and God and the universe in the *Upanishads.*[1] When one comes to read the *Upanishads* themselves, many may have been repelled by what Yeats calls the "polyglot, hyphenated, latinised, muddied muddle of distortion that froze belief" in some of the scholarly translations. Furthermore, the *Upanishads,* being the earliest speculations about the universe and encasing some very naïve dogmatizations as well as later and more mature developments, are often not easy to follow or enjoy, made worse by commentaries by scholars, who help to split the hair, not yet split fine enough by the forest sages of ancient India. A discriminating selection is therefore necessary. Personally I have been kept away from many of the world's masterpieces because in my young days I happened to stumble upon some bad edition or translation of a certain work.

The *Upanishads* are believed to have been mostly written before the time of Buddha, although some (the last five in the present selection) might be as late as 400 B.C. They represented the development of

[1] See Yeats' Preface to *The Ten Principal Upanishads* which he helped to translate in collaboration with a Hindu scholar Shree Purohit Swami (Macmillan, 1937).

probably three or four centuries, and this fact explains why the different *Upanishads* are of uneven value to the modern reader. Compare, for instance, the first selection with the last in the present volume, and one can readily see the difference in language and thought. It may be surprising that the *Upanishads* as a whole are regarded by the Hindus today as holy scriptures, which are still sung daily as a form of devotion by the learned Brahmans. Yet an analogy with the Old Testament should make the matter clear. The fact that the books of the Old Testament present different views of Jahveh, now a tribal god, now a supreme ruler, now jealous and fierce with vengeance, and now benevolent, does not make any difference to the average believer in Christianity. The modern Christian who believes God is the Father of all mankind still finds it possible to enjoy the story of Joshua who prayed to God to stay the sun in order to allow him time to annihilate the enemy.

The *Upanishads* are strictly speaking the speculations of the Indian forest sages about the world system, and therefore quite different from the Hymns of the *Rigveda.* "It is this brooding on the meaning of existence which distinguishes the spirit of the Hymns from the *Upanishads,*" says Tagore. The entire collection breathes the spirit of a troubled inquiry into the problems of the reality, the individual soul and the world soul behind the phenomena. What is the Ultimate Self, the Atman? What is the spirit of the universe, the Brahman? What is mind and what is matter, and what is that personality behind our consciousness, the Purusha? Finally, what is God? Is he transcendent or immanent? The Sankhya philosophers believed that the world consists of two principles, souls and the material world, the *Prakriti,* or Nature, while the Vedanta philosophers believed in one all-comprising unity. Out of such debates in the forest grew these books. These questions are vexing in their very nature, whether to the ancient or to the better-equipped modern man. Two important conclusions are: first, that the ultimate reality, or Brahman, is incomprehensible and surpasses all understanding. "And he (the Atman) can only be described as no, no!" The second result, the most important discovery, is that the individual soul, or Self, within is identical with the soul without, and that by discovering this real Self, man achieves freedom and emancipation from Mara, or the illusions. Still, as Tagore rightly points out, the whole approach is too intellectual, and the final consummation of Vedic philosophy is to be found in *Bhagavad-Gita,* written perhaps two centuries later, when an ardent devotion to a personal God took the place of these

barren speculations. According to Buddhist records, there were as many as sixty-three confusing schools of philosophy at the time of Buddha (563–483 B.C.), which explained Buddha's revolt at their futile reasonings and ritualism. Buddha came as a giant, and attacked the same problem from a human approach, and preached the fourfold truth: that there is human suffering, that there is a cause for this suffering, that there is an escape, and that his teachings of emancipation from illusions and senses and desires constitute that escape. Against that Brahmanic background, Buddhism had an austere clarity of method and goal, but as will be seen from the *Upanishads,* it was from this soil that Buddha's teachings naturally grew.

It is the "troubled intensity" of man's search after the soul and its moral earnestness that seems to constitute the value and significance of the *Upanishads.* Nor can it be said that the final message of the *Upanishads* can be ignored even today:

"Only when men shall roll up the sky like a hide, will there be an end to misery, unless God has first been known."

—*The Svetāsvatara Upanishad*

The Upanishads

Translated by F. Max Müller

THE STORY OF THE CREATION[1]

IN THE BEGINNING this was Self alone, in the shape of a person (*Purusha*). He looking round saw nothing but his Self. He first said, 'This is I'; therefore he became I by name. Therefore even now, if a man is asked, he first says, 'This is I,' and then pronounces the other name which he may have. And because before all this, he burnt down all evils, therefore he was a person. Verily he who knows this, burns down everyone who tries to be before him.

He feared, and therefore anyone who is lonely fears. He thought, 'As there is nothing but myself, why should I fear?' Thence his fear passed away. For what should he have feared? Verily fear arises from a second only.

But he felt no delight. Therefore a man who is lonely feels no delight. He wished for a second. He was so large as man and wife together. He then made this his Self to fall in two and thence arose husband and wife. Therefore Yājñavalkya said: 'We two are thus (each of us) like half a shell.' Therefore the void which was there, is filled by the wife. He embraced her, and men were born.

She thought, 'How can he embrace me, after having produced me from himself? I shall hide myself.'

She then became a cow, the other became a bull and embraced her, and hence cows were born. The one became a mare, the other a stallion;

[1] This curious and rather crude story of the creation contains nevertheless many germinal ideas of Hinduism.

the one a male ass, the other a female ass. He embraced her, and hence one-hoofed animals were born. The one became a she-goat, the other a he-goat; the one became a ewe, the other a ram. He embraced her, and hence goats and sheep were born. And thus he created everything that exists in pairs, down to the ants.

He knew, 'I indeed am this creation, for I created all this.' Hence he became the creation, and he who knows this lives in this his creation.

Next he thus produced fire by rubbing. From the mouth, as from the fire-hole, and from the hands he created fire. Therefore both the mouth and the hands are inside without hair, for the fire-hole is inside without hair.

And when they say, 'Sacrifice to this or sacrifice to that god,' each god is but his manifestation, for he is all gods.

Now, whatever there is moist, that he created from seed; this is Soma. So far verily is this universe either food or eater. Soma indeed is food, Agni eater. This is the highest creation of Brahman, when he created the gods from his better part, and when he, who was (then) mortal, created the immortals. Therefore it was the highest creation. And he who knows this, lives in this his highest creation.

Now all this was then undeveloped. It became developed by form and name, so that one could say, 'He, called so and so, is such a one.' Therefore at present also all this is developed by name and form, so that one can say, 'He, called so and so, is such a one.'

He (Brahman or the Self) entered thither, to the very tips of the finger-nails, as a razor might be fitted in a razor-case, or as fire in a fire-place.

He cannot be seen, for, in part only, when breathing, he is breath by name; when speaking, speech by name; when seeing, eye by name; when hearing, ear by name; when thinking, mind by name. All these are but the names of his acts. And he who worships (regards) him as the one or the other, does not know him, for he is apart from this (when qualified) by the one or the other (predicate). Let men worship him as Self, for in the self all these are old.[1] This Self is the footstep of everything, for through it one knows everything. And as one can find again by footsteps what was lost, thus he who knows this finds glory and praise.

This, which is nearer to us than anything, this Self, is dearer than a son, dearer than wealth, dearer than all else.

[1] The Brahman "Self" is almost what we mean by the divine nature immanent in ourselves as well as in the external world.

And if one were to say to one who declares another than the Self dear, that he will lose what is dear to him, very likely it would be so. Let him worship the Self alone as dear. He who worships the Self alone as dear, the object of his love will never perish.

Here they say: 'If men think that by knowledge of Brahman they will become everything, what then did that Brahman know, from whence all this sprang?'

Verily in the beginning this was Brahman, that Brahman knew (its) Self only, saying, 'I am Brahman.' From it all this sprang. Thus, whatever Deva was awakened (so as to know Brahman), he indeed became that (Brahman); and the same with Rishis and men. The Rishi Vāmadeva saw and understood it, singing, 'I was Manu (moon), I was the sun.' Therefore now also he who thus knows that he is Brahman, becomes all this, and even the Devas cannot prevent it, for he himself is their Self.

Now if a man worships another deity, thinking the deity is one and he another, he does not know. He is like a beast for the Devas. For verily, as many beasts nourish a man, thus does every man nourish the Devas. If only one beast is taken away, it is not pleasant; how much more when many are taken! Therefore it is not pleasant to the Devas that men should know this.

Verily in the beginning this was Brahman, one only. That being one, was not strong enough. It created still further the most excellent Kshatra (power), viz. those Kshatras (powers) among the Devas—Indra, Varuna, Soma, Rudra, Parjanya, Yama, Mrityu, Isāna. Therefore there is nothing beyond the Kshatra, and therefore at the Rājasūya sacrifice the Brāhmana sits down below the Kshatriya. He confers that glory on the Kshatra alone. But Brahman is (nevertheless) the birthplace of the Kshatra. Therefore though a king is exalted, he sits down at the end (of the sacrifice) below the Brahman, as his birthplace. He who injures him, injures his own birthplace. He becomes worse, because he has injured one better than himself.

He was not strong enough. He created the people, the classes of Devas which in their different orders are called Vasus, Rudras, Ādityas, Visve Devas, Maruts.

He was not strong enough. He created the Sūdra caste, as nourisher. This earth verily is Pūshan (the nourisher); for the earth nourishes all this whatsoever.

He was not strong enough. He created still further the most excellent

Law. Law is the Kshatra (power) of the Kshatra, therefore there is nothing higher than the Law. Thenceforth even a weak man rules a stronger with the help of the Law, as with the help of a king. Thus the Law is what is called the true. And if a man declares what is true, they say he declares the Law; and if he declares the Law, they say he declares what is true. Thus both are the same.

There are then this Brahman, Kshatra, Vis, and Sūdra. Among the Devas that Brahman existed as fire only, among men as Brāhmana, as Kshatriya through the (divine) Kshatriya, as Vaisya through the (divine) Vaisya, as Sūdra through the (divine) Sūdra. Therefore people wish for their future state among the Devas through the sacrificial fire only; and among men through the Brāhmana, for in these two forms did Brahman exist.

Now if a man departs this life without having seen his true future life (in the Self), then that Self, not being known, does not receive and bless him, as if the Veda had not been read, or as if a good work had not been done. Nay, even if one who does not know that (Self), should perform here on earth some great holy work, it will perish for him in the end. Let a man worship the Self only as his true state. If a man worships the Self only as his true state, his work does not perish, for whatever he desires that he gets from that Self.

Now verily this Self (of the ignorant man) is the world of all creatures. In so far as man sacrifices and pours out libations, he is the world of the Devas; in so far as he repeats the hymns, etc., he is the world of the Rishis; in so far as he offers cakes to the fathers and tries to obtain offspring, he is the world of the fathers; in so far as he gives shelter and food to men, he is the world of men; in so far as he finds fodder and water for the animals, he is the world of the animals; in so far as quadrupeds, birds, and even ants live in his houses, he is their world. And as everyone wishes his own world not to be injured, thus all beings wish that he who knows this should not be injured. Verily this is known and has been well reasoned.

In the beginning this was Self alone, one only. He desired, 'Let there be a wife for me that I may have offspring, and let there be wealth for me that I may offer sacrifices.' Verily this is the whole desire, and, even if wishing for more, he would not find it. Therefore now also a lonely person desires, 'Let there be a wife for me that I may have offspring, and let there be wealth for me that I may offer sacrifices.' And so long as he does not obtain either of these things, he thinks he is incomplete.

Now his completeness (is made up as follows): mind is his Self (husband); speech the wife; breath the child; the eye all worldly wealth, for he finds it with the eye; the ear his divine wealth, for he hears it with the ear. The body (ātman) is his work, for with the body he works. This is the fivefold sacrifice, for fivefold is the animal, fivefold man, fivefold all this whatsoever. He who knows this, obtains all this.

(*From the Brihadāranyaka Upanishad*)

THE SUBTLE ESSENCE[1]

'As the bees, my son, make honey by collecting the juices of distant trees, and reduce the juice into one form.

'And as these juices have no discrimination, so that they might say, I am the juice of this tree or that, in the same manner, my son, all these creatures, when they have become merged in the True (either in deep sleep or in death), know not that they are merged in the True.

'Whatever these creatures are here, whether a lion, or a wolf, or a boar, or a worm, or a midge, or a gnat, or a mosquito, that they become again and again.

'Now that which is that subtle essence, in it all that exists has its self. It is the True. It is the Self, and thou, O Svetaketu, art it.'

'Please, Sir, inform me still more,' said the son.

'Be it so, my child,' the father replied.

'These rivers, my son, run, the eastern (like the Gangā) toward the east, the western (like the Sindhu) toward the west. They go from sea to sea. They become indeed sea. And as those rivers, when they are in the sea, do not know, I am this or that river.

'In the same manner, my son, all these creatures, when they have come back from the True, know not that they have come back from the True. Whatever these creatures are here, whether a lion, or a wolf, or a boar, or a worm, or a midge, or a gnat, or a mosquito, that they become again and again.

'That which is that subtle essence, in it all that exists has its self. It is the True. It is the Self, and thou, O Svetaketu, art it.'

'Please, Sir, inform me still more,' said the son.

'Be it so, my child,' the father replied.

[1] This is the teaching of Uddālaka Aruni to his son Svetaketu.

'If someone were to strike at the root of this large tree here, it would bleed, but live. If he were to strike at its stem, it would bleed, but live. If he were to strike at its top, it would bleed, but live. Pervaded by the living Self that tree stands firm, drinking in its nourishment and rejoicing;

'But if the living Self leaves one of its branches, that branch withers; if it leaves a second, that branch withers; if it leaves a third, that branch withers. If it leaves the whole tree, the whole tree withers. In exactly the same manner, my son, know this.' Thus he spoke:

'This body indeed withers and dies when the living Self has left it; the living Self dies not.

'That which is that subtle essence, in it all that exists has its self. It is the Self, and thou, Svetaketu, art it.'

'Please, Sir, inform me still more,' said the son.

'Be it so, my child,' the father replied.

'Fetch me from thence a fruit of the nyagrodha tree.'

'Here is one, Sir.'

'Break it.'

'It is broken, Sir.'

'What do you see there?'

'These seeds, almost infinitesimal.'

'Break one of them.'

'It is broken, Sir.'

'What do you see there?'

'Not anything, Sir.'

The father said: 'My son, that subtle essence which you do not perceive there, of that very essence this great nyagrodha tree exists.

'Believe it, my son. That which is the subtle essence, in it all that exists has its self. It is the True. It is the Self, and thou, O Svetaketu, art it.'

'Please, Sir, inform me still more,' said the son.

'Be it so, my child,' the father replied.

'Place this salt in water, and then wait on me in the morning.'

The son did as he was commanded.

The father said to him: 'Bring me the salt, which you placed in the water last night.'

The son having looked for it, found it not, for, of course, it was melted.

The father said: 'Taste it from the surface of the water. How is it?'
The son replied: 'It is salt.'
'Taste it from the middle. How is it?'
The son replied: 'It is salt.'
'Taste it from the bottom. How is it?'
The son replied: 'It is salt.'
The father said: 'Throw it away and then wait on me.'
He did so; but salt exists for ever.

Then the father said: 'Here also, in this body, forsooth, you do not perceive the True, my son; but there indeed it is.

'That which is subtle essence, in it all that exists has its self. It is the True. It is the Self, and thou, Svetaketu, art it.'

'Please, Sir, inform me still more,' said the son.

'Be it so, my child,' the father replied.

(*From the Chhāndogya Upanishad*)

THE TRUE BRAHMAN

All this is Brahman. Let a man meditate on that visible world as beginning, ending, and breathing in it.

Now man is a creature of will. According to what his will is in this world, so will he be when he has departed this life. Let him therefore have this will and belief:

The intelligent, whose body is spirit, whose form is light, whose thoughts are true, whose nature is like ether, from whom all works, all desires, all sweet odours and tastes proceed; he who embraces all this, who never speaks, and is never surprised,

He is my self within the heart, smaller than a corn of rice, smaller than a corn of barley, smaller than a mustard seed, smaller than a canary seed or the kernel of a canary seed. He also is my self within the heart, greater than the earth, greater than the sky, greater than heaven, greater than all these worlds.

He from whom all works, all desires, all sweet odours and tastes proceed, who embraces all this, who never speaks and who is never surprised, he, my self within the heart, is that Brahman. When I shall have departed from hence, I shall obtain that Self. He who has this faith has no doubt; thus said Sāndilya,[1] yea, thus he said.

(*From the Chhāndogya Upanishad*)

[1] This chapter is frequently quoted as the Sāndilya-vidyā.

EMANCIPATION

Hari, Om. There is this city of Brahman (the body), and in it the palace, the small lotus of the heart, and in it that small ether. Now what exists within that small ether, that is to be sought for, that is to be understood.

And if they should say to him: 'Now with regard to that city of Brahman, and the palace in it, i.e. the small lotus of the heart, and the small ether within the heart, what is there within it that deserves to be sought for, or that is to be understood?'

Then he should say: 'As large as this ether is, so large is that ether within the heart. Both heaven and earth are contained within it, both fire and air, both sun and moon, both lightning and stars; and whatever there is of him here in the world, and whatever is not, all that is contained within it.'

And if they should say to him: 'If everything that exists is contained in that city of Brahman, all beings and all desires, then what is left of it, when old age reaches it and scatters it, or when it falls to pieces?'

Then he should say: 'By the old age of the body, the ether does not age; by the death of the body, the ether is not killed. That is the true Brahma-city. In it all desires are contained. It is the Self, free from sin, free from old age, from death and grief, from hunger and thirst, which desires nothing but what it ought to desire, and imagines nothing but what it ought to imagine. Now as here on earth people follow as they are commanded, and depend on the object which they are attached to, be it a country or a piece of land,

'And as here on earth, whatever has been acquired by exertion perishes, so perishes whatever is acquired for the next world by sacrifices and other good actions performed on earth. Those who depart from hence without having discovered the Self and those true desires, for them there is no freedom in all the worlds. But those who depart from hence, after having discovered the Self and those true desires, for them there is freedom in all the worlds.

(From the Chhāndogya Upanishad)

THE CONQUEST OF DEATH

I

VĀJASRAVASA, desirous of heavenly rewards, surrendered at a sacrifice all that he possessed. He had a son of the name of Nachiketas.

When the promised presents were being given (to the priests), faith entered into the heart of Nachiketas, who was still a boy, and he thought:

'Unblessed, surely, are the worlds to which a man goes by giving cows which have drunk water, eaten hay, given their milk, and are barren.'

He (knowing that his father had promised to give up all that he possessed, and therefore his son also) said to his father: 'Dear father, to whom wilt thou give me?'

He said it a second and a third time. Then the father replied:

'I shall give thee unto Death.'

(The father, having once said so, though in haste, had to be true to his word and to sacrifice his son.)

The son said: 'I go as the first, at the head of many (who have still to die); I go in the midst of many (who are now dying). What will be the work of Yama [1] which to-day he has to do unto me?

'Look back how it was with those who came before, look forward how it will be with those who come hereafter. A mortal ripens like corn, like corn he springs up again.'

(Nachiketas enters into the abode of Yama Vaivasvata, and there is no one to receive him. Thereupon one of the attendants of Yama is supposed to say:)

'Fire enters into the houses, when a Brāhmana enters as a guest. That fire is quenched by this peace-offering—bring water, O Vaivasvata!

'A Brāhmana that dwells in the house of a foolish man without receiving food to eat, destroys his hopes and expectations, his possessions, his righteousness, his sacred and his good deeds, and all his sons and cattle.'

(Yama, returning to his house after an absence of three nights, during which time Nachiketas had received no hospitality from him, says:)

'O Brāhmana, as thou, a venerable guest, hast dwelt in my house three nights without eating, therefore choose now three boons. Hail to thee! and welfare to me!'

[1] The King of Death.

II

Nachiketas said: 'O Death, as the first of the three boons I choose that Gautama, my father, be pacified, kind, and free from anger towards me; and that he may know me and greet me, when I shall have been dismissed by thee."

Yama said: 'Through my favour Auddālaki Āruni, thy father, will know thee, and be again towards thee as he was before. He shall sleep peacefully through the night, and free from anger, after having seen thee freed from the mouth of death.'

Nachiketas said: 'In the heaven-world there is no fear; thou art not there, O Death, and no one is afraid on account of old age. Leaving behind both hunger and thirst, and out of the reach of sorrow, all rejoice in the world of heaven.

'Thou knowest, O Death, the fire-sacrifice which leads us to heaven; tell it to me, for I am full of faith. Those who live in the heaven-world reach immortality—this I ask as my second boon.'

Yama said: 'I tell it thee, learn it from me, and when thou understandest that fire-sacrifice which leads to heaven, know, O Nachiketas, that it is the attainment of the endless worlds, and their firm support, hidden in darkness.'

Yama then told him that fire-sacrifice, the beginning of all the worlds, and what bricks are required for the altar, and how many, and how they are to be placed. And Nachiketas repeated all as it had been told to him. Then Mrityu, being pleased with him, said again:

The generous, being satisfied, said to him: 'I give thee now another boon; that fire-sacrifice shall be named after thee, take also this many-coloured chain.

'He who has three times performed this Nāchiketa rite, and has been united with the three (father, mother, and teacher), and has performed the three duties (study, sacrifice, almsgiving) overcomes birth and death. When he has learnt and understood this fire, which knows (or makes us know) all that is born of Brahman, which is venerable and divine, then he obtains everlasting peace.

'He who knows the three Nāchiketa fires, and knowing the three, piles up the Nāchiketa sacrifice, he, having first thrown off the chains of death, rejoices in the world of heaven, beyond the reach of grief.

'This, O Nachiketas, is thy fire which leads to heaven, and which

thou hast chosen as thy second boon. That fire all men will proclaim. Choose now, O Nachiketas, thy third boon.'

Nachiketas said: 'There is that doubt, when a man is dead—some saying, he is; others, he is not. This I should like to know, taught by thee; this is the third of my boons.'

Death said: 'On this point even the gods have doubted formerly; it is not easy to understand. That subject is subtle. Choose another boon, O Nachiketas, do not press me, and let me off that boon.'

Nachiketas said: 'On this point even the gods have doubted indeed, and thou, Death, hast declared it to be not easy to understand, and another teacher like thee is not to be found—surely no other boon is like unto this.'

Death said: 'Choose sons and grandsons who shall live a hundred years, herds of cattle, elephants, gold, and horses. Choose the wide abode of the earth, and live thyself as many harvests as thou desirest.

'If you can think of any boon equal to that, choose wealth, and long life. Be king, Nachiketas, on the wide earth. I make thee the enjoyer of all desires.

'Whatever desires are difficult to attain among mortals, ask for them according to thy wish; these fair maidens with their chariots and musical instruments—such are indeed not to be obtained by men—be waited on by them whom I give to thee, but do not ask me about dying.'

Nachiketas said: 'These things last till to-morrow, O Death, for they wear out this vigour of all the senses. Even the whole of life is short. Keep thou thy horses, keep dance and song for thyself.

'No man can be made happy by wealth. Shall we possess wealth, when we see thee? Shall we live, as long as thou rulest? Only that boon which I have chosen is to be chosen by me.

'What mortal, slowly decaying here below, and knowing, after having approached them, the freedom from decay enjoyed by the immortals, would delight in a long life, after he has pondered on the pleasures which arise from beauty and love?

'No, that on which there is this doubt, O Death, tell us what there is in that great hereafter. Nachiketas does not choose another boon but that which enters into the hidden world.'

III

Death said: 'The good is one thing, the pleasant another; these two, having different objects, chain a man. It is well with him who clings to the good; he who chooses the pleasant, misses his end.

'The good and pleasant approach man: the wise goes round about them and distinguishes them. Yea, the wise prefers the good to the pleasant, but the fool chooses the pleasant through greed and avarice.

'Thou, O Nachiketas, after pondering all pleasures that are or seem delightful, hast dismissed them all. Thou hast not gone into the road that leadeth to wealth, in which many men perish.

'Wide apart and leading to different points are these two, ignorance, and what is known as wisdom. I believe Nachiketas to be one who desires knowledge, for even many pleasures did not tear thee away.

'Fools dwelling in darkness, wise in their own conceit, and puffed up with vain knowledge, go round and round, staggering to and fro, like blind men led by the blind.

'The hereafter never rises before the eyes of the careless child, deluded by the delusion of wealth. "This is the world," he thinks, "there is no other"—thus he falls again and again under my sway.

'He (the Self) of whom many are not even able to hear, whom many, even when they hear of him, do not comprehend; wonderful is a man, when found, who is able to teach him (the Self); wonderful is he who comprehends him, when taught by an able teacher.

'That Self, when taught by an inferior man, is not easy to be known, even though often thought upon; unless it be taught by another, there is no way to it, for it is inconceivably smaller than what is small.

'That doctrine is not to be obtained by argument, but when it is declared by another, then, O dearest, it is easy to understand. Thou hast obtained it now; thou art truly a man of true resolve. May we have always an inquirer like thee!'

Nachiketas said: 'I know that what is called a treasure is transient, for that eternal is not obtained by things which are not eternal. Hence the Nāchiketa fire-sacrifice has been laid by me first; then, by means of transient things, I have obtained what is not transient.'

Yama said: 'Though thou hadst seen the fulfilment of all desires, the foundation of the world, the endless rewards of good deeds, the shore where there is no fear, that which is magnified by praise, the wide

abode, the rest, yet being wise thou hast with firm resolve dismissed it all. . . .

'The knowing Self is not born, it dies not; it sprang from nothing, nothing sprang from it. The Ancient is unborn, eternal, everlasting; he is not killed, though the body is killed.

'If the killer thinks that he kills, if the killed thinks that he is killed, they do not understand; for this one does not kill, nor is that one killed.

'The Self, smaller than small, greater than great, is hidden in the heart of that creature. A man who is free from desires and free from grief, sees the majesty of the Self by the grace of the Creator.

'Though sitting still, he walks far; though lying down, he goes everywhere. Who, save myself, is able to know that God who rejoices and rejoices not?

'The wise who knows the Self as bodiless within the bodies, as unchanging among changing things, as great and omnipresent, does never grieve.

'That Self cannot be gained by the Veda, nor by understanding, nor by much learning. He whom the Self chooses, by him the Self can be gained. The Self chooses his body as his own.

'But he who has not first turned away from his wickedness, who is not tranquil, and subdued, or whose mind is not at rest, he can never obtain the Self even by knowledge.

'Who then knows where He is, He to whom the Brahmans and Kshatriyas are (as it were) but food, and death itself a condiment?

(*From the Katha Upanishad*)

THE ONE GOD

The snarer who rules alone by his powers, who rules all the worlds by his powers, who is one and the same, while things arise and exist—they who know this are immortal.

For there is one Rudra only, they do not allow a second, who rules all the worlds by his powers. He stands behind all persons, and after having created all worlds he, the protector, rolls it up at the end of time.

That one god, having his eyes, his face, his arms, and his feet in every place, when producing heaven and earth, forges them together with his arms and his wings.

He, the creator and supporter of the gods, Rudra, the great seer, the

lord of all, he who formerly gave birth to Hiranyagarbha, may he endow us with good thoughts.

O Rudra, thou dweller in the mountains, look upon us with that most blessed form of thine which is auspicious, not terrible, and reveals no evil!

O lord of the mountains, make lucky that arrow which thou, a dweller in the mountains, holdest in thy hand to shoot. Do not hurt man or beast!

Those who know beyond this the High Brahman, the vast, hidden in the bodies of all creatures, and alone enveloping everything, as the Lord, they become immortal.

I know that great person (purusha) of sunlike lustre beyond the darkness. A man who knows him truly, passes over death; there is no other path to go.

This whole universe is filled by this person (purusha), to whom there is nothing superior, from whom there is nothing different, than whom there is nothing smaller or larger, who stands alone, fixed like a tree in the sky.

That which is beyond this world is without form and without suffering. They who know it, become immortal, but others suffer pain indeed.

That Bhagavat exists in the faces, the heads, the necks of all, he dwells in the cave (of the heart) of all beings, he is all-pervading, therefore he is the omnipresent Siva.

That person is the great lord; he is the mover of existence, he possesses that purest power of reaching everything; he is light, he is undecaying.

The person, not larger than a thumb, dwelling within, always dwelling in the heart of man, is perceived by the heart, the thought, the mind; they who know it become immortal.

The person with a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet, having compassed the earth on every side, extends beyond it by ten fingers' breadth.

That person alone (purusha) is all this, what has been and what will be; he is also the lord of immortality; he is whatever grows by food.

Its hands and feet are everywhere, its eyes and head are everywhere, its ears are everywhere, it stands encompassing all in the world.

Separate from all the senses, yet reflecting the qualities of all the senses, it is the lord and ruler of all, it is the great refuge of all.

The embodied spirit within the town with nine gates, the bird, flut-

ters outwards, the ruler of the whole world, of all that rests and of all that moves.

Grasping without hands, hasting without feet, he sees without eyes, he hears without ears. He knows what can be known, but no one knows him; they call him the first, the great person.

The Self, smaller than small, greater than great, is hidden in the heart of the creature. A man who has left all grief behind, sees the majesty, the Lord, the passionless, by the grace of the creator.

I know this undecaying, ancient one, the self of all things, being infinite and omnipresent. They declare that in him all birth is stopped, for the Brahma-students proclaim him to be eternal.

(*From the Svetāsvatara Upanishad*)

THE IMMANENCE OF GOD

He, the sun, without any colour, who with set purpose by means of his power produces endless colours, in whom all this comes together in the beginning, and comes asunder in the end—may he, the god, endow us with good thoughts.

That Self indeed is fire, it is the sun, it is wind, it is moon; the same also is the starry firmament, it is Brahman, it is water, it is Prajāpati.

Thou art woman, thou art man; thou are youth, thou art maiden; thou, as an old man, totterest along on thy staff; thou art born with thy face turned everywhere.

Thou art the dark-blue bee, thou art the green parrot with red eyes, thou art the thunder-cloud, the seasons, the seas. Thou art without beginning, because thou art infinite, thou from whom all worlds are born.

There is one unborn being (female), red, white, and black, uniform, but producing manifold offspring. There is one unborn being (male) who loves her and lies by her; there is another who leaves her, while she is eating what has to be eaten.

Two birds, inseparable friends, cling to the same tree. One of them eats the sweet fruit, the other looks on without eating.

On the same tree man sits grieving, immersed, bewildered, by his own impotence. But when he sees the other lord contented, and knows his glory, then his grief passes away.

He who does not know that indestructible being of the Rigveda, that highest ether-like Self wherein all the gods reside, of what use is the Rigveda to him? Those only who know it, rest contented.

That from which the maker (māyin) sends forth all this—the sacred verses, the offerings, the sacrifices, the panaceas, the past, the future, and all that the Vedas declare—in that the other is bound up through that art (māyā).

Know then nature is art, and the great Lord the maker; the whole world is filled with what are his members.

If a man has discerned him, who being one only, rules over every cause, in whom all this comes together and comes asunder again, who is the lord, the bestower of blessing, the adorable god, then he passes for ever into that peace.

He, the creator and supporter of the gods, Rudra, the great seer, the lord of all, who saw Hiranyagarbha being born, may he endow us with good thoughts.

He who is the sovereign of the gods, he in whom all the worlds rest, he who rules over all two-footed and four-footed beings, to that god let us sacrifice an oblation.

He who has known him who is more subtle than subtle, in the midst of chaos, creating all things, having many forms, alone enveloping everything, the happy one (Siva) passes into peace for ever.

He also was in time the guardian of this world, the lord of all, hidden in all beings. In him the Brahmarshis and the deities are united, and he who knows him cuts the fetters of death asunder.

He who knows the blessed (Siva) hidden in all beings, like the subtle film that rises from out the clarified butter, alone enveloping everything —he who knows the god, is freed from all fetters.

That god, the maker of all things, the great Self, always dwelling in the heart of man, is perceived by the heart, the soul, the mind;—they who know it become immortal.

When the light has risen, there is no day, no night, neither existence nor non-existence; the blessed (Siva) alone is there. That is the eternal, the adorable light of Savitri—and the ancient wisdom proceeded thence.

No one has grasped him above, or across, or in the middle. There is no image of him whose name is Great Glory.

His form cannot be seen, no one perceives him with the eye. Those who through heart and mind know him thus abiding in the heart, become immortal.

'Thou art unborn,' with these words some one comes near to thee, trembling. O Rudra, let thy gracious face protect me for ever!

O Rudra! hurt us not in our offspring and descendants, hurt us not

in our own lives, nor in our cows, nor in our horses! Do not slay our men in thy wrath, for, holding oblations, we call on thee always.

(*From the Svetāsvatara Upanishad*)

GOD IS WITHIN YOU

In the imperishable and infinite Highest Brahman, wherein the two, knowledge and ignorance, are hidden, the one, ignorance, perishes, the other, knowledge, is immortal; but he who controls both, knowledge and ignorance, is another.

It is he who, being one only, rules over every cause, over all forms, and over all germs; it is he who, in the beginning, bears in his thoughts the wise son, the fiery, whom he wishes to look on while he is born.

In that field in which the god, after spreading out one net after another in various ways, draws it together again, the Lord, the great Self, having further created the lords, thus carries on his lordship over all.

As the car of the sun shines, lighting up all quarters, above, below, and across, thus does that god, the holy, the adorable, being one, rule over all that has the nature of a germ.

He, being one, rules over all and everything, so that the universal germ ripens its nature, diversifies all natures that can be ripened, and determines all qualities.

Brahma knows this, which is hidden in the upanishads, which are hidden in the Vedas, as the Brahma-germ. The ancient gods and poets who knew it, they became it and were immortal.

But he who is endowed with qualities, and performs works that are to bear fruit, and enjoys the reward of whatever he has done, migrates through his own works, the lord of life, assuming all forms, led by the three Gunas,[1] and following the three paths.

That lower one also, not larger than a thumb, but brilliant like the sun, who is endowed with personality and thoughts, with the quality of mind and the quality of body, is seen small even like the point of a goad.

That living soul is to be known as part of the hundredth part of the point of a hair, divided a hundred times, and yet it is to be infinite.

[1] Three primeval elements, light, passion and dullness which compose the world. See the Glossary under *Gunas*.

It is not woman, it is not man, nor is it neuter; whatever body it takes, with that it is joined only.

By means of thoughts, touching, seeing, and passions the incarnate Self assumes successively in various places various forms, in accordance with his deeds, just as the body grows when food and drink are poured into it.

That incarnate Self, according to his own qualities, assumes many shapes, coarse or subtile, and having himself caused his union with them, he is seen as another and another, through the qualities of his acts, and through the qualities of his body.

He who knows him who has no beginning and no end, in the midst of chaos, creating all things, having many forms, alone enveloping everything, is freed from all fetters.

Those who know him who is to be grasped by the mind, who is not to be called the body, who makes existence and non-existence, the happy one (Siva) who also creates the elements, they have left the body.

(*From the Svetāsvatara Upanishad*)

KNOW GOD

Some wise men, deluded, speak of Nature, and others of Time as the cause of everything; but it is the greatness of God by which this Brahma-wheel is made to turn.

It is at the command of him who always covers this world, the knower, the time of time, who assumes qualities and all knowledge, it is at his command that this creation unfolds itself, which is called earth, water, fire, air, and ether;

He who, after he has done that work and rested again, and after he has brought together the self with matter, with one, two, three, or eight, with time also and with the subtle qualities of the mind,

Who after starting the works endowed with the three qualities,[1] can order all things, yet when, in the absence of all these, he has caused the destruction of the work, goes on, being in truth different from all he has produced;

He is the beginning, producing the causes which unite the soul with the body, and, being above the three kinds of time, past, present, future, he is seen as without parts, after we have first worshipped that adorable

[1] The Gunas referred to in the preceding section.

god, who has many forms, and who is the true source of all things, as dwelling in our own mind.

He is beyond all the forms of the world and of time, he is the other, from whom this world moves round, when one has known him who brings good and removes evil, the lord of bliss, as dwelling within the self, the immortal, the support of all.

Let us know that highest great lord of lords, the highest deity of deities, the master of masters, the highest above, as God, the lord of the world, the adorable.

There is no effect and no cause known of him, no one is seen like unto him or better; his high power is revealed as manifold, as inherent, acting as force and knowledge.

There is no master of his in the world, no ruler of his, not even a sign of him. He is the cause, the lord of the lords of the organs, and there is of him neither parent nor lord.

That only God who spontaneously covered himself, like a spider, with threads drawn from the first cause, grant us entrance into Brahman.

He is the one God, hidden in all beings, all-pervading, the self within all beings, watching over all works, dwelling in all beings, the witness, the perceiver, the only one, free from qualities.

He is the one ruler of many who do not act; he makes the one seed manifold. The wise who perceive him within their self, to them belongs eternal happiness, not to others.

He is the eternal among eternals, the thinker among thinkers, who, though one, fulfils the desires of many. He who has known that cause which is to be apprehended by Sāmkhya (philosophy) and Yoga (religious discipline), he is freed from all fetters.

The sun does not shine there, nor the moon and the stars, nor these lightnings, and much less this fire. When he shines, everything shines after him; by his light all this is lightened.

He is the one bird in the midst of the world; he is also like the sun that has set in the ocean. A man knows him truly, passes over death; there is no other path to go.

He makes all, he knows all, the self-caused, the knower, the destroyer of time, who assumes qualities and knows everything, the master of nature and of man, the lord of the three qualities, the cause of the bondage, the existence, and the liberation of the world.

He who has become that, he is the immortal, remaining the lord, the

knower, the ever-present guardian of this world, who rules this world for ever, for no one else is able to rule it.

Seeking for freedom I go for refuge to that God who is the light of his own thoughts, he who first creates Brahman and delivers the Vedas to him;

Who is without parts, without actions, tranquil, without fault, without taint, the highest bridge to immortality—like a fire that has consumed its fuel.

Only when men shall roll up the sky like a hide, will there be an end of misery, unless God has first been known.[1]

Through the power of his penance and through the grace of God has the wise Svetāsvatara truly proclaimed Brahman, the highest and holiest, to the best of ascetics, as approved by the company of Rishis.

This highest mystery in the Vedānta, delivered in a former age, should not be given to one whose passions have not been subdued, nor to one who is not a son, or who is not a pupil.

If these truths have been told to a high-minded man, who feels the highest devotion for God, and for his Guru[2] as for God, then they will shine forth—then they will shine forth indeed.

[1] This may be considered the final message of the Upanishads.
[2] Preceptor.

The Lord's Song

(THE BHAGAVAD-GITA)

INTRODUCTION

THE BHAGAVAD-GITA stands in relation to Hinduism as the Sermon on the Mount stands in relation to the Christian teachings. It has been described as the "Essence of the Vedas." An Indian saint has said: "All the Upanishads are the cows, the Lord Himself is the Milker, Arjuna, the calf, and those of purified understanding are the drinkers of the milk, the supreme nectar of the Gita."

Originally it formed a section of Book Six of the great Hindu epic, the *Mahabharata*. It is in the form of a conversation between the warrior Arjuna and his charioteer, who really was the "Blessed Lord," the god Krishna. War had become inevitable between the sons of Pandu (of which Arjuna was one) and their cousin Duryodhana and his brothers, the sons of the blind King Dhritarashtra, or briefly between the Pandavas and the Kurus. Just before the beginning of the battle, Arjuna refused to fight, when he saw he was going to kill his own kinsmen. The god Krishna explained to him that no one could be killed, since men's souls live for ever, and thereon the conversation began, extending to eighteen chapters, covering every phase of ethical and religious questions, concerning the yoga of action, the justification for rituals and sacrifices, the manifestations of god in this physical world, and ending with the important injunction on accepting Krishna as a refuge to whom all people of all classes could come and find peace and salvation. The old blind King, unable to watch the battle was offered sight by a great sage, but declined it, for he had no wish to see the slaughter among his own kins-

men. The great sage then granted Sanjaya the power of perceiving at a distance all that happened on the battlefield. Therefore, principally in the beginning and in the end, we see the remarks of Sanjaya, concerning the battle, while the questions and answers between Arjuna and the Lord Krishna, as reported by Sanjaya, form the substance of the main body of the work.

The whole book breathes the Hindu mental and religious atmosphere, although some of the teachings, such as the emphasis on action and doing it without regard to selfish benefit but for devotion to God, and particularly the denial of materialism and emphatic Vedic assertion of the spirit behind all things, offer viewpoints that are either present or are greatly needed in the modern world. Anyway, the contrasts are as important as the similarities, and it is because the work is characteristically the most important product of the Hindu religious spirit that its influence and position in India have been so great. Dr. E. J. Thomas calls it "one of the greatest of the religious phenomena of the world" and "the earliest and still the greatest monument of Hindu religion."

The *Bhagavad-Gita* has not the same appeal for me as the Buddhist *Dhammapada,* but that is no reason why it should be less important to the Hindu nation. What is important is to note the progress of the Hindu mind from the *Upanishads* to the *Gita* and its increasing clarity of thought and ways of thinking closer to our own. The work was probably written in the second century before the Christian era, although no approximate date can be assigned. So important did it become in the Hindu religious thought that every system had to square itself with the teachings of the Lord's Song. There are strands of pantheism, monotheism, theism and deism in it. Whether it was added to by successive writers is less important than the fact that these teachings were, and still are, accepted by the Hindu people as the ultimate embodiment of religious wisdom. Any attempt by Western higher critics to separate the several strands of belief from one another in the Song and "restore" the "original text" is bound to be both foolish and ridiculous. Certain scholars, presupposing that one man could hold only one consistent system of belief and that that system must be the one they hold to be the original one, and ignoring the fact that such a document was necessarily a synthesis of many streams of influence, satisfactory to its believers, have attempted the foolish task of determining its original composition. It never occurs to them that the world could be God and at the same time a personal God could exist—rather fine distinctions that exist in academic

minds only. The great power of the Gita lies in the fact that it teaches a "loving faith" or devotion (*bhakti*) to a personal God, Krishna. The final message of Krishna is: "Giving up all Dharmas, come unto me alone for refuge. I shall free thee from all sins; grieve not." (XVIII, 66)

It is extremely important that such a testimony of the Hindu religious spirit should not be translated by a scholar of Sanskrit, but by a Hindu follower who is at home with its language and at one with the spirit of its teachings, and who knows what the different verses mean, directly and simply, to the Indian people.

The Bhagavad-Gita has engaged the loving labors of many translators, and many excellent translations exist, such as Lionel D. Barnett's "Lord's Song" (Temple Classics) with a long introduction and copious notes, E. J. Thomas's "The Song of the Lord" (Wisdom of the East Series), the well-known version by Annie Besant (Theosophical Press), Sir Edwin Arnold's "The Song Celestial" (Trübner), M. M. Chatterji's "The Lord's Lay" (Houghton), with commentary and notes and references to the Christian Scriptures, and the scholarly translation by Telang in the Sacred Books of the East. I have, however, chosen the translation by Swami Paramananda (The Vedanta Center) because I believe, more than the others, it shows that mastery of the languages and that profound understanding of the thought content, so that the result is, as it should be, an easy, effective and mature version, without either the cumbersomeness of the scholarly or the surreptitious paraphrasing of the over-interpretative. As the editor of the book remarks, "The letter must be illumined by the spirit; and none can read the translation without feeling convinced that the head, heart, and life have co-operated in the making of it." That is no mean compliment. I have kept the footnotes by Swami Paramananda.

The Blessed Lord's Song

SRIMAD-BHAGAVAD-GITA

Translated by Swami Paramananda

CHAPTER I

Dhritarāshtra asked:

1. O Sanjaya, assembled together on the sacred plain of Kurukshetra, being desirous to fight, what did my people and the Pāndavas do?

Sanjaya replied:

2. The Prince Duryodhana, having seen the Pāndava forces arrayed, approached his teacher (Drona) and spoke these words:

3. Behold this mighty host of the sons of Pāṇdava arrayed by the son of Drupada, thy gifted pupil.

4-6. Here are heroes, mighty bowmen, equals in battle to Bhima and Arjuna—the great warriors, Yuyudhāna, Virāta, Drupada; valiant Drishtaketu, Chekitāna and the King of Kāshi; Purujit, Kunti-Bhoja and Shaibya, the greatest of men; the powerful Yudhamanyu and the brave Uttamaujas; the son of Subhadrā and the sons of Draupadi; all of them mighty car-warriors.

7. O best of twice-born,[1] hear also of those who are distinguished among ourselves, the leaders of my army; I relate their names for thy information.

[1] A Brāhmin is called a twice-born because he is born for the second time when he receives his holy thread or badge for spiritual life.

8. Thyself and Bhishma and Karna, and Kripa, the victorious in battle, Aswatthamā, Vikarna, Jayadratha, the son of Somadatta.

9. Also there are many heroes skillful in battle armed with many kinds of weapons, determined to lay down their lives for my sake.

10. Yet this army of ours, though commanded by Bhishma, seems insufficient; but their army, commanded by Bhima, seems sufficient.

11. Therefore ye all, being stationed in your proper places in the divisions of the army, support Bhishma alone.

12. The powerful, the eldest of the Kurus (Bhishma), the grandsire, in order to cheer him (Duryodhana), sounded aloud a lion's roar and blew his conch.

13. Then (following Bhishma), conchs, kettledrums, tabors, trumpets and cowhorns suddenly sounded. The noise was tremendous.

14. Then Mādhava (Krishna) and Pāndava (Arjuna) stationed in their great war chariot, yoked to white horses, also blew their divine conchs.

15. Hrishikesha[1] (Krishna) blew the Pānchajanya; and Dhananjaya[2] (Arjuna), Devadatta[3] (God-given); and Vrikodara[4] (Bhima), doer of terrible deeds, blew his large conch Paundra.

16. King Yudhishthira, son of Kunti, blew the conch named Ananta-vijaya (endless victory). Nakula and Sahadeva their Sughosha and Manipushpaka.

17. The King of Kāshi, the great bowman, and the mighty warrior Shikhandi, Dhrishtadyumna, Virāta and the unconquered hero, Sātyaki;

18. (King) Drupada and the sons of Draupadi and the mighty-armed son of Subhadrā, each blew respectively his own conch, O Lord of the Earth!

19. That tremendous uproar, filling earth and sky with sound, rent the hearts of Dhritarāshtra's party.

20. Then, O Lord of the Earth! the son of Pāndu (Arjuna), whose ensign was the monkey, seeing Dhritarāshtra's army arrayed and the throwing of weapons about to begin, raised his bow and spoke the following words to Krishna:

[1] The Lord of the senses.
[2] Conqueror of wealth.
[3] Name of the conch.
[4] Having the belly of a tiger, indicating the physical formation of a hero.

Arjuna said:

21-23. O Achyuta (changeless, Krishna), place my chariot between the two armies desirous of battle, so that I may see with whom I have to fight in this outbreak of war, for I desire to observe those who are assembled here for battle wishing to please the evil-minded son of Dhritarāshtra by taking his side.

Sanjaya said:

24-25. O King! Requested thus by Gudākesha[1] (Arjuna), Krishna, having placed the war chariot between the two armies in front of Bhishma, Drona and all the rulers of the earth, spoke thus: O son of Prithā (Arjuna), behold all the Kuru forces gathered together.

26. Then Pārtha (Arjuna) saw there in both armies arrayed grandfathers, fathers-in-law, uncles, brothers and cousins, his own sons and their sons and grandsons, comrades, teachers and friends.

27. Then he, the son of Kunti (Arjuna), seeing all his kinsmen stationed in their ranks, spoke thus sorrowfully, overwhelmed with deep compassion:

Arjuna said:

28. O Krishna, seeing these my kinsmen, gathered here desirous to fight, my limbs fail me, my mouth is parched;

29. My body shivers, my hair stands on end, my Gandiva (bow) slips from my hand, my skin is burning.

30. O Keshava (Krishna, the slayer of Keshi), I am not able to stand upright, my mind is in a whirl and I see adverse omens.

31. O Krishna, neither do I see any good in slaying my own people in this strife. I desire neither victory, nor kingdom, nor pleasures.

32-34. Teachers, uncles, sons and grandsons, grandfathers, fathers-in-law, brothers-in-law, besides other kinsmen, for whose sake empire, enjoyment and pleasures are desired, they themselves stand here in battle, forsaking life and wealth. What avail, then, is kingdom, enjoyment, or even life, O Govinda (Krishna)?

35. These warriors I do not wish to kill, even though I am killed by them, not even for the dominion over the three worlds, how much less for the sake of this earth, O slayer of Madhu.

[1] The conqueror of sleep.

36. O Janārdana (giver of prosperity and salvation, Krishna), what pleasure could there be for us by killing the sons of Dhritarāshtra? Sin alone would take possession of us by slaying these evil-doers.

37. Therefore we ought not to kill these sons of Dhritarāshtra who are our relations; for how can we, O Mādhava (Krishna), obtain happiness by destroying our own kinsmen?

38. Although these (my enemies), their understanding being overpowered by greed, see no evil from extinction of families and no sin in hostility to friends.

39. But, O Janārdana, why should not we turn away from this sin, seeing clearly the evil in destruction of family?

40. From the destruction of a family the immemorial religious rites of that family perish. Spirituality being destroyed, that whole family is overpowered by unrighteousness.

41. O Krishna, from the predominance of unrighteousness, the women of that family become corrupt; and women being corrupted, there arises intermingling of castes.

42. This intermingling of castes leads the destroyers of the family to hell, as also the family itself; for their ancestors fall, being deprived of the offerings of rice ball and water.[1]

43. By these misdeeds of the slayers of the family, bringing about confusion of caste, the immemorial religious rites of family and caste are destroyed.

44. O Janārdana, we have heard that for such men, whose household religious rites have been destroyed, the dwelling in hell is inevitable.

45. Alas! what a great sin we are resolved to incur, being prepared to slay our kinsmen, actuated by greed of kingdom and pleasure.

46. Verily, it would be better for me if the sons of Dhritarāshtra, weapons in hand, should slay me in the battle, unresisting and unarmed.

Sanjaya said:

47. Speaking thus in the midst of the battlefield, Arjuna sank down on the seat of his war chariot, casting aside his bow and arrows, his mind overwhelmed with sorrow.

Here ends the First Chapter called
"The Grief of Arjuna"

[1] Certain funeral rites performed for the welfare of the departed ones.

CHAPTER II

Sanjaya said:

1. To him (Arjuna) whose mind was thus overpowered by pity and grief and eyes dimmed with tears, Madhusudana (Krishna) spoke these words:

The Blessed Lord said:

2. O Arjuna, whence comes upon thee in this critical moment this depression unworthy of an Aryan, disgraceful, and contrary to the attainment of heaven?

3. O son of Prithā, yield not to unmanliness; it does not befit thee. Casting off this mean faint-heartedness, arise, O terror of thy foes!

Arjuna said:

4. O destroyer of enemies and slayer of Madhu (Krishna), how can I fight with arrows in battle against Bhishma and Drona, who are worthy to be worshipped (by me).

5. Instead of slaying these great-souled masters, it would be better even to live in this life by begging; but killing them, all our enjoyments of wealth and desires, even in this world, will be stained with blood.

6. Indeed I know not which of the two is better for us, whether we should conquer them or they should conquer us. For those very sons of Dhritarāshtra stand before us, after slaying whom we should not care to live.

7. With my nature overpowered by pity and depression and mind confused about duty, I implore Thee (O Krishna) tell me with certainty what is good for me. I am Thy disciple, instruct me, who have taken refuge in Thee.

8. For I see not what can remove this grief which withers my senses, even if I should obtain unrivalled and flourishing dominion over the earth and rulership over the gods.

Sanjaya said:

9. Gudākesha (Arjuna), the conqueror of his foes, having thus spoken to the Lord of the senses (Krishna), said: "I shall not fight, O Govinda!" and became silent.

10. O descendant of King Bharata, Hrishikesha (Krishna), as if

smilingly, spoke these words to him (Arjuna), who was thus grief-stricken in the midst of the two armies.

The Blessed Lord said:

11. Thou hast been mourning for those who should not be mourned for and yet thou speakest (apparent) words of wisdom; but the truly wise mourn not either for the dead or for the living.

12. It is not that I have never existed before, nor thou, nor all these kings. Nor is it that all of us shall cease to exist hereafter.

13. As in this body the embodied soul passes through childhood, youth and old age, in the same manner it goes from one body to another; therefore the wise are never deluded regarding it (the soul).

14. O son of Kunti, the feelings of heat, cold, pleasure, pain, are produced from the contact of the senses with sense-objects; they are with beginning and end, transitory. Therefore, O Bhārata, endure them (bravely).

15. O mighty among men, he is fit to attain immortality who is serene and not afflicted by these sensations, but is the same in pleasure and pain.

16. There is no existence for the unreal and the real can never be non-existent. The Seers of Truth know the nature and final ends of both.

17. Know That to be indestructible by which all this is pervaded. No one is ever able to destroy that Immutable.

18. These bodies are perishable; but the dwellers in these bodies are eternal, indestructible and impenetrable. Therefore fight, O descendant of Bharata!

19. He who considers this (Self) as a slayer or he who thinks that this (Self) is slain, neither of these knows the Truth. For It does not slay, nor is It slain.

20. This (Self) is never born, nor does It die, nor after once having been, does It go into non-being. This (Self) is unborn, eternal, changeless, ancient. It is never destroyed even when the body is destroyed.

21. O son of Prithā, how can he slay or cause the slaying of another who knows this (Self) to be indestructible, eternal, unborn and immutable?

22. As man casts off worn-out garments and puts on others which are new, similarly the embodied soul, casting off worn-out bodies, enters into others which are new.

23. Sword cannot pierce It (Self), fire cannot burn It, water cannot wet It, and air cannot dry It.

24. It cannot be pierced, nor burned, nor wet, nor dried. It is eternal, all-pervading, unchangeable, immovable, everlasting.

25. This (Self) is said to be unmanifested, unthinkable, unchangeable; therefore knowing this to be so, thou shouldst not grieve.

26. But even if thou thinkest that this (Self) is subject to constant birth and death, even then, O mighty-armed, thou shouldst not grieve.

27. For that which is born death is certain, and for the dead birth is certain. Therefore grieve not over that which is unavoidable.

28. O Bhārata, all creatures are unmanifested in the beginning, manifested in their middle state, unmanifested again in the end. What is there to grieve about?

29. Some look upon It (Self) with wonder, some speak about It with wonder, some hear about It with wonder and yet others, even after hearing about It, know It not.

30. The dweller in the body of everyone is ever indestructible; therefore, O Bhārata, thou shouldst not grieve over any creature.

31. Looking upon it even from the standpoint of thine own Dharma,[1] thou shouldst not waver, for nothing is higher for a Kshatriya (warrior) than a righteous war.

32. O son of Prithā, fortunate indeed are Kshatriyas to whom comes unsought, as an open gate to heaven, such a war.

33. But if thou shouldst not take part in this righteous war, then forfeiting thine own duty and honor, thou shalt incur sin.

34. People will ever speak ill of thee; for the esteemed, dishonor is even worse than death.

35. These great car-warriors will think that thou hast withdrawn from the battle through fear. And thou shalt be thought of lightly by those who once honored thee highly.

36. Thine enemies will speak unutterable disgraceful things against thee and blame thy valor. What can be more painful than this?

37. If thou fallest in battle, thou shalt obtain heaven; if thou conquerest, thou shalt enjoy the earth. Therefore, O son of Kunti, arise and be resolved to fight.

38. Regarding alike pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, fight thou the battle. Thus sin will not stain thee.

39. Thus I have declared unto thee the wisdom of Self-realization

[1] Moral and religious duty.

Listen now, O son of Prithā, regarding Yoga, by knowing which thou shalt be freed from the bonds of Karma (cause and effect).

40. In this (Yoga) there is neither waste of effort nor possibility of evil results. Even a little practice of this (Yoga) delivers one from great fear.

41. O son of Kuru, in this (Yoga), the well-resolved mind is single and one-pointed; but the purposes of the irresolute mind are many-branched and endless.

42. O son of Prithā, those who delight in the flowery speech of the unwise and are satisfied with the mere letter of the Vedas (Scriptures) saying: "There is naught else";

43. And those who are full of desires for self-gratification, regarding heaven[1] as their highest goal, and are engaged in many intricate Scriptural rites just to secure pleasure and power as the result of their deeds for their future incarnations;

44. Whose discrimination is stolen away by the love of power and pleasure and who are thus deeply attached therein, (for such people) it is impossible to obtain either firm conviction (in purpose) or God-consciousness.

45. The Vedas deal with the three *Gunas*.[2] O Arjuna, be thou free from these three Gunas; free from the pairs of opposites (cold and heat, pleasure and pain); ever steadfast, be thou free from (thoughts of) acquiring or keeping and self-possessed.

46. To the Brāhmana, the knower of Truth, all the Vedas are of as little use as a small water-tank is during the time of a flood, when water is everywhere.[3]

47. To work alone thou hast the right, but never to the fruits thereof. Be thou neither actuated by the fruits of action, nor be thou attached to inaction.

48. O Dhananjaya, abandoning attachment and regarding success and failure alike, be steadfast in Yoga and perform thy duties. Even-mindedness is called Yoga.

49. O Dhananjaya, work (with desire for results) is far inferior to work with understanding. Therefore seek refuge in the Yoga of understanding. Wretched indeed are those who work for results.

50. Being possessed with this understanding, one frees one's self even

[1] Heaven is the temporary abode of highest pleasure.

[2] Sattwa, quality of goodness; Rajas, quality of activity and passion; Tamas, quality of darkness and inertia.

[3] This verse shows the difference between mere book knowledge and direct vision of Truth.

in this life from good and evil. Therefore engage thyself in this Yoga. Skillfulness in action is called Yoga.

51. The wise, possessed with knowledge, abandoning the fruits of their actions, become freed from the fetters of birth and reach that state which is beyond all evil.

52. When thine intellect will cross beyond the mire of delusion, then alone shalt thou attain to indifference regarding things heard and yet to be heard.

53. When thine intellect, tossed by the various conflicting opinions of the Scriptures, will become firmly established in the Self, then thou shalt attain Yoga (Self-realization or union with God).

Arjuna said:

54. O Keshava, what are the signs of the man of steady wisdom, one who has attained God-consciousness? How does the man of steady wisdom speak? How does he sit? How does he walk?

The Blessed Lord said:

55. O Pārtha, when a man is satisfied in the Self by Self alone and has completely cast out all desires from the mind, then he is said to be of steady wisdom.

56. He whose mind is not agitated in calamities and who has no longing for pleasure, free from attachment, fear and anger, he indeed is said to be a saint of steady wisdom.

57. He who is free from all attachment and neither rejoices on receiving good nor is vexed on receiving evil, his wisdom is well-established.

58. When he completely withdraws his senses from sense-objects as the tortoise withdraws its limbs, then his wisdom becomes well-established.

59. The embodied, through the practice of abstinence (i.e. not giving food to the senses), can deaden the feelings of the senses, but longing still lingers in the heart; all longings drop off when he has seen the Supreme.

60. O son of Kunti, dangerous are the senses, they even carry away forcibly the mind of a discriminative man who is striving for perfection.

61. The man of steady wisdom, having subdued them all (senses), becomes fixed in Me, the Supreme. His wisdom is well-established whose senses are under control.

Thinking of sense-objects, man becomes attached thereto. From attachment arises longing and from longing anger is born.

63. From anger arises delusion; from delusion, loss of memory is caused. From loss of memory, the discriminative faculty is ruined and from the ruin of discrimination, he perishes.[1]

64. But the self-subjugated attains peace and moves among objects with the senses under control, free from any longing or aversion.

65. In peace there is an end to all misery and the peaceful mind soon becomes well-established in wisdom.

66. There is no wisdom for the unsteady and there is no meditation for the unsteady and for the unmeditative there is no peace. How can there be any happiness for the peaceless?

67. For the mind that yields to the uncontrolled and wandering senses, carries away his wisdom just as a boat on water is carried away by wind.

68. Therefore, O mighty-armed, his wisdom is established whose senses are well-restrained from all objects of sense.

69. That which is night to all beings, therein the self-subjugated remains awake; and in that where all beings are awake, that is night for the knower of Self.[2]

70. As the ocean remains calm and unaltered though the waters flow into it, similarly a self-controlled saint remains unmoved when desires enter into him; such a saint alone attains peace, but not he who craves the objects of desire.

71. That man attains peace who, abandoning all desires, moves about without attachment and longing, without the sense of "I" and "mine."

72. O son of Prithā, this is the state of dwelling in Brahman (absolute Truth); having attained this, no one is ever deluded. Being established in this knowledge even at the end of life, one attains oneness with Brahman (the Supreme).

Here ends the Second Chapter called
"Sānkhya-Yoga, or The Path of Wisdom"

[1] When a greedy man sees a bag of gold and begins to think of its value, attachment for the thing grows in his heart; from attachment he feels intense longing to get possession of it and when anything or anybody interferes with the gratification of his desire, it results in anger. From anger delusion rises, i.e., confusion of understanding; then his memory fails him, i.e., he forgets his position and duty in life; and when he is in this state, without discrimination of right and wrong, he does things to cause his own ruin.

[2] The spiritual plane, which to ordinary mortals is like night, full of darkness, is like day, full of clearness and light, to the wise ones; and the sense plane, where the ordinary minds are wide awake and active, there the wise men are as if asleep, knowing the futility of sense desire. These are the two poles of human existence represented by night and day.

CHAPTER III

Arjuna said:

1. O Janārdana, O Keshava (Krishna), if to thy mind (the path of) wisdom is superior to (the path of) action, then why art thou engaging me in this terrible action?

2. By these seemingly conflicting words[1] thou art bewildering my understanding; therefore tell me with certainty that one of these, by following which I can attain the highest.

The Blessed Lord said:

3. O sinless one, in this world twofold is the path already described by me. The path of wisdom is for the meditative and the path of work is for the active.

4. A man does not attain to freedom from action by non-performance of action, nor does he attain to perfection merely by giving up action.

5. No one can ever rest even for an instant without performing action, for all are impelled by the Gunas (qualities), born of Prakriti (Nature), to act incessantly.

He who, restraining the organs of action, sits holding thoughts of sense-objects in his mind, that self-deluded one is called a hypocrite.

7. But, O Arjuna, he who, controlling the senses by the mind, follows without attachment the path of action with his organs of action, he is esteemed.

8. Do thou therefore perform right and obligatory actions, for action is superior to inaction. Without work, even the bare maintenance of thy body would not be possible.

9. This world is bound by actions, except when they are performed for the sake of *Yajna*.[2] Therefore, O son of Kunti, do thou perform action without attachment.

10. In the beginning the Lord of creatures, having created mankind, together with Yajna, said: "By this (Yajna) ye shall prosper and obtain all desired results, like Kāmadhuk.[3]

11. "By this (Yajna) ye shall please the Devas (bright ones) and the

[1] Sometimes praising work, sometimes praising wisdom.

[2] Religious ceremonies, sacrifices, worship, etc.

[3] The symbolic cow who possesses the extraordinary quality of giving to the milker whatever he desires.

Devas, in their turn, will cherish you. Thus by cherishing one another, ye shall obtain the highest good.

12. "The Devas, pleased by the Yajna, will bestow upon you all the objects of your desire." He who enjoys the objects given by the Devas without offering to them, he is indeed a thief.

13. The righteous, eating the remnants of Yajna (sacrifice), become free from all sins; but the unrighteous, who cook for themselves, eat sin.

14. Creatures come forth from food; food is produced from rain; rain comes as the result of Yajna; and Yajna is born of Karma (action).

15. Know that Karma rises from the Vedas and Vedas from the Imperishable. Therefore the all-pervading Truth (Brahman) is ever established in Yajna (sacrifice).

16. He who here (on earth) does not follow the wheel thus set revolving, lives in sin and sensuality; O Pārtha, he lives in vain.

17. That man, who is devoted to the Self, is satisfied with Self and is content in the Self alone, for him there is nothing to do.

18. For him there is nothing in this world to gain by action or to lose by inaction; nor does he need to depend on any being for any object.

19. Therefore, being unattached, perform thy duties (the work that ought to be done) unceasingly; for through the performance of action, unattached, man attains the highest.

20. Verily, by work alone, Janaka[1] and other (great souls) attained perfection. Also just from the point of view of benefiting mankind, thou shouldst perform action.

21. Whatsoever a superior (man) does, that alone inferior men do. Whatever example he sets by his actions, that the people (masses) follow.

22. O Pārtha, there is nothing for Me to accomplish; nothing there is in the three worlds unattained or to be attained by Me, and yet I continue in action.

23. For if I do not work unceasingly, O Pārtha, men would follow my path (example) in every way.

24. If I did not work, these worlds would perish.[2] I should cause the confusion of castes,[3] and also the destruction of all beings.

25. O descendant of Bharata, as the ignorant (who are attached to

[1] The great king who was noted for his wisdom and non-attachment.
[2] From the lack of social, moral and spiritual examples.
[3] Order or division of qualities among men.

results) work, so also (with the same fervor) the wise should act, devoid of attachment, being desirous to help mankind.

26. One should not unsettle the understanding of the ignorant who are attached to action; the man of wisdom, by steadily performing actions, should engage (the ignorant) in all right action.

27. All actions are performed by the Gunas, born of Prakriti (Nature). One whose understanding is deluded by egoism alone thinks: "I am the doer."

28. But, O mighty-armed, the Seer of Truth, understanding the divisions of Guna and Karma (qualities, senses and actions), and knowing that it is only the senses which run after sense-objects, does not become deluded therein.

29. A man of perfect wisdom should not unsettle the people of small and imperfect understanding, who are deluded by the qualities born of Nature and are attached to the function of the Gunas (senses).

30. Surrendering all action to Me and fixing the mind on the Self, devoid of hope[1] and egoism,[2] and free from the fever (of grief), fight, O Arjuna.

31. Those who constantly practise this teaching of Mine with true faith and devotion and unflinching heart, they too are freed from (the fetters of) action.

32. But those who find fault with my teaching and do not follow it, such self-deluded ones, devoid of all knowledge and discrimination, know them to be ruined.

33. Even a wise man acts according to his nature; beings follow nature: What can restraint do?

34. Attachment and aversion of the senses are based on sense-objects; let none come under the sway of these two. They are his enemies.

35. Better one's own duty, though devoid of merit, than the duty of another, well performed. Better is death, in following one's own duty; the duty of another is full of danger.

Arjuna said:

36. But, O Descendant of Vrishni (Krishna), impelled by what power does a man commit sin even against his wish, constrained, as it were, by force?

[1] Longing for results.
[2] Sense of "I" and "Mine."

The Blessed Lord said:

37. It is desire, it is anger, born of Rajo-Guna (quality of passion); of unappeasable craving and of great sin; know this as the foe in this world.[1]

38. As fire is enveloped by smoke, as a mirror by dust, as an embryo by the womb, so is this (Self) covered by that.

39. O son of Kunti, wisdom is covered by this insatiable fire of desire, the constant enemy of the wise.

40. The senses, mind and intellect are said to be its seats; through these it deludes the embodied one by covering his wisdom.

41. Therefore, O mightiest of the Bharata race, first subduing the senses, kill this (desire), the sinful, destroyer of wisdom and Self-knowledge.

42. The senses are said to be superior (to the body), the mind is superior to the senses and intellect is superior to the mind; and that which is superior to the intellect is He (Atman, Self).

43. O mighty-armed, thus knowing Him who is superior to the intellect, and subduing self by the Self, destroy this enemy in the form of desire, difficult to overcome.

Here ends the Third Chapter called
"Karma-Yoga, or The Path of Work"

CHAPTER IV

The Blessed Lord said:

1. I declared this imperishable Yoga to Vivasvān, and Vivasvān told it to Manu, Manu taught it to Ikshvāku.

2. Thus, handed down in regular succession, the royal sages knew it. This Yoga through long lapse of time has been lost in this world, O Parantapa (Arjuna).

3. That same ancient Yoga has been (again) today declared to thee by Me, for thou art my devotee and my friend. This is the supreme secret.

Arjuna said:

4. Later was thy birth and the birth of Vivasvān was prior to thine. How, then, am I to know that thou didst declare this in the beginning?

[1] Desire and anger are inseparable, as anger is caused by obstructed desire.

The Blessed Lord said:

5. O Arjuna, both you and I have gone through many births. I know them all, but thou knowest them not, O Parantapa.

6. Though I am unborn and of unchangeable nature, and though I am Lord of all beings, yet by ruling over my Prakriti (Nature) I come into being by my own Māyā (mysterious power).

7. O Bhārata, whenever there is decline of virtue and predominance of vice, then I embody Myself.

8. For the protection of the good and for the destruction of evil-doers and for the re-establishment of Dharma (virtue and religion) I am born from age to age.

9. He who thus understands truly My Divine birth and action is not born again on leaving his body, O Arjuna, but he attains unto Me.

10. Freed from attachment, fear and anger, being absorbed in Me and taking refuge in Me, purified by the fire of wisdom, many have attained My Being.

11. In whatever way men worship Me, in the same way I fulfil their desires. O Pārtha, in every way men follow My path.

12. Those who long for success in this world worship the gods, for in the human world success is quickly attained by actions.

13. The fourfold caste[1] was created by Me according to Guna and Karma (qualities and actions). Although I am the author (of that), yet know me to be the non-doer and changeless.

14. Actions pollute Me not, nor have I any desire for the fruits of action. He who knows Me thus, is not bound by action.

15. Knowing this, the ancient seekers after liberation performed action. Do thou, therefore, also perform action as did the ancients in olden time.

16. Even wise men are bewildered regarding what is action and what is inaction. Therefore I shall teach thee that action, by knowing which thou shalt be freed from all evil.

17. For verily the nature of right action should be understood, also that of unlawful action and of inaction. The nature of Karma (action) is indeed very difficult to understand.

[1] Brāhmana represents spiritual qualities,—goodness, serenity, etc. Kshatrya stands for the combination of Sattwa (goodness) and Rajas (passion, ambition). Vaisya, merchant class, is represented by Rajas (passion) and Tamas (dullness). Sudra, or the servant class, is typified by Tamas (dullness, ignorance and inertia). In short, this fourfold caste gives an organized form of division of labor, placing each one in a position according to his quality and capacity.

18. He who sees inaction in action and action in inaction, he is intelligent among men; he is a man of established wisdom and a true performer of all actions.[1]

19. Him the sages call wise whose undertakings are devoid of desire for results and of plans, whose actions are burned by the fire of wisdom.

20. Having abandoned attachment for the fruits of action, ever content and dependent on none, though engaged in action, yet he does nothing.

21. Being freed from longing, with self under control, and giving up all sense of possession (ownership), he is not tainted by sin merely by performing bodily action.

22. Content with whatever comes without effort, undisturbed by the pairs of opposites (pleasure and pain, heat and cold), free from envy, even-minded in success and failure, though acting (he) is not bound.

23. One whose attachment is gone, who is liberated, whose mind is well-established in wisdom, who works for sacrifice alone, his whole Karma melts away.

24. Brahman (absolute Truth) is the offering, Brahman is the oblation, the sacrificial fire is (another form of) Brahman and by Brahman is the sacrifice performed. Thus, by performing actions with the consciousness of Brahman, he reaches Brahman alone.

25. Some Yogis offer sacrifices to the Devas, while others perform sacrifice in the fire of Brahman by offering self by the self alone.

26. Some offer the sense of hearing and other senses as oblation in the fire of control; still others offer sound and other sense-objects as oblation in the fire of the senses.

27. Others offer all the actions of the senses and the functions of the vital forces as oblation in the fire of self-control, lighted by wisdom.

28. Some offer wealth as sacrifice; some, austerity and Yoga as sacrifice; still others, of rigid vow and self-control, offer study of the Scriptures and wisdom as sacrifice.

29. Yet others offer as sacrifice the outgoing breath in the incoming and the incoming breath in the outgoing, stopping the courses of the outgoing and incoming breaths; thus they constantly practise Prānāyāma.[2] Whereas others, regulating their food, offer the functions of the vital forces in the Prāna itself as sacrifice.

[1] This verse means that a truly wise man knows how to differentiate body, mind and senses from the Self. Even when activity is going on, on the physical plane, he knows that the true Self is not acting.

[2] Certain breathing exercises for the control of Prāna; vital force.

30-31. All the knowers of sacrifice, burning off their sins (impurities) by the performance of sacrifice and drinking the nectar of the remnant of sacrifice, go to the eternal Brahman (absolute Truth). O best of the Kurus (Arjuna), not even this world is for the non-performer of sacrifice, how much less is the other (world).

32. All these various sacrifices are given in the Vedas (the revelation of Brahman or absolute Truth). Know them all to be born of action; knowing thus thou shalt be freed.

33. O Parantapa (Arjuna), wisdom-sacrifice is far superior to the sacrifice performed with material objects. The entire realm of action, O Pārtha, ends in wisdom.

34. Learn this by reverence, by enquiry and by humble service. Those men of wisdom, who have realized the Truth, will teach thee supreme wisdom.

35. Knowing which, O Pāndava, thou shalt not again thus fall into error (delusion) and by which thou shalt see all beings in (thy) Self and also in Me.

36. Even if thou art the most sinful of the sinful, thou shalt cross over (the ocean of) sin by the bark of wisdom.

37. As kindled fire reduces fuel to ashes, O Arjuna, so does the wisdom fire reduce all actions (Karma) to ashes.

38. Nothing indeed in this world purifies like wisdom. He who is perfected by Yoga, finds it in time within himself by himself.

39. The man of (unflinching) faith, who has mastered his senses, attains wisdom. Having gained wisdom, immediately he attains to supreme peace.

40. The ignorant, the faithless and one of doubting mind perishes. There is neither this world nor the next nor any happiness for the doubting self.

41. O Dhananjaya, one who has renounced actions by Yoga and has cut asunder doubt by wisdom and who is self-possessed, actions bind him not.

42. Therefore, cutting asunder with the sword of wisdom this doubt of Self, born of ignorance, lying in the heart, take refuge in Yoga and arise, O Bhārata!

Here ends the Fourth Chapter called
"Jnāna-Yoga, or The Path of Wisdom"

CHAPTER V

Arjuna said:

1. O Krishna, renunciation of action thou praisest and then again Yoga (performance of action); tell me with certainty which of the two is better?

The Blessed Lord said:

2. Renunciation (of action) and performance of action both lead to liberation. But of the two, performance of action is superior to renunciation of action.

3. Know him to be a perpetual renouncer (Sannyāsi) who has neither longing nor aversion, O mighty-armed; being free from the pairs of opposites (cold and heat, pleasure and pain, etc.), he is easily liberated from all bondage.

4. Children (the ignorant) alone say, not wise men, that wisdom and Yoga are different. He who is truly established in one obtains the fruits of both.

5. That place which is attained by the Jnānis (wise men), is also reached by the Karma Yogins (men of action). He who looks upon wisdom and the performance of action as one, is a true Seer.

6. O mighty-armed, renunciation of action is difficult to attain without performance of action. The wise man, being devoted to Yoga (action), ere long attains to Brahman (absolute Truth).

7. One who is devoted to Yoga, of purified mind, self-subjugated and a master of the senses, realizes his Self as the Self of all beings; though acting he is not tainted.

8-9. The self-possessed knower of Truth should think: "I do nothing at all," though seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, walking, sleeping, breathing, speaking, letting go and holding, opening and closing the eyes, firmly convinced that senses alone move among sense-objects.

10. He who performs actions, surrendering them to Brahman and abandoning all attachment, is not polluted by sin, as a lotus-leaf[1] by water.

11. Karma Yogins, for self-purification alone, perform actions with

[1] The lotus-leaf, though it grows in water, is not moistened by it.

body, with mind, with intellect, even with the senses, abandoning all attachment.

12. The steady-minded, by giving up all (attachment for) the fruits of action, obtains peace, born of steadfastness. The unsteady (fickle), being attached to fruits through desire, is ever bound (by action).

13. The self-subjugated embodied one, by renouncing all actions through mental discrimination, rests happily in the city of nine gates (body), neither acting (himself) nor causing (others) to act.

14. The Lord creates neither the agency (sense of "I"), nor actions for the world, nor union with the fruit of action. It is nature that leads to action.

15. The omnipresent Lord partakes neither of the good nor of the evil deed of any. Wisdom is covered by ignorance, thus mortals are deluded.

16. But those, whose ignorance is destroyed by Self-knowledge, their knowledge of the Self, like the sun, illumines the Supreme.

17. Those whose heart and soul are absorbed in That (Supreme), who are steadily devoted to That and regard That as their highest goal, they go never to return, their sins (impurities) being washed off by wisdom.

18. The wise look upon a Brāhmana endowed with learning and humility, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and a Pariah (dog-eater) with equal regard.[1]

19. Even here (in this world), existence (earthly life) is conquered by them whose mind rests in equality, for Brahman is without imperfection and equal. Therefore they abide in Brahman.

20. The steady-minded, undeluded knower of Brahman, being well-established in Brahman, neither rejoices on receiving the pleasant nor grieves on receiving the unpleasant.

21. He, whose heart is unattached to external contacts (of the senses), realizes the happiness that is in the Self; being united with Brahman by meditation, he attains to eternal bliss.

22. The enjoyments which are born through contact (with sense-objects) are ever generators of misery; (they are) with beginning and end. O son of Kunti, the wise do not seek pleasure in them.

23. He who can withstand the impulse of lust and anger even here (in this life), before he is separated from the body, is steadfast and truly a happy man.

[1] They see the same underlying Self everywhere.

24. He whose joy is within, whose pleasure is within, and whose light is within, that Yogi, being well-established in Brahman, attains to absolute freedom.

25. The self-subjugated Rishis (Truth-Seers), whose impurities are washed off, whose doubts are destroyed, and who are engaged in doing good to all beings, attain supreme liberation.

26. The Sannyāsins, who are freed from lust and anger, with hearts well-subdued and Self realized, for them absolute freedom exists here and hereafter.

27-28. Shutting out the external contact with sense-objects, the eyes fixed between the eyebrows,[1] and equalizing the currents of Prāna (incoming breath) and Apāna (the outgoing breath) inside the nostrils, the meditative man, having mastered the senses, mind and intellect, being freed from desire, fear and anger, and regarding freedom as his supreme goal, is liberated forever.

29. Knowing Me to be the receiver and dispenser of Yajna (sacrifice) and austerity, the Supreme Lord of the Universe and the Friend of all beings, he attains to peace.

Here ends the Fifth Chapter called
"Sannyāsa-Yoga, or The Path of Renunciation"

CHAPTER VI

The Blessed Lord said:

1. He who performs his duty without depending on the fruits of action, he is a Sannyāsi (a true renouncer), and a Yogi (a true worker), not he who is without sacrificial fire or without action.

2. O Pāndava, that which is called Sannyāsa (renunciation) know that to be also Yoga (true performance of action), for none can become a Yogi without giving up fancies for the fruits of action.

3. For the meditative who is striving to attain Yoga, action is said to be the means; for the same man, when he has attained to Yoga, inaction is said to be the means.

4. He who is unattached to sense-objects and to actions, and has given up all fancies for the fruits of action, he is said to have attained Yoga.

5. Let a man raise himself by his Self, let him never lower himself; for he alone is the friend of himself and he alone is the enemy of himself.

[1] A form of concentration.

6. He who has conquered himself by the Self, he is the friend of himself; but he whose self is unconquered, his self acts as his own enemy like an external foe.

7. The Supreme Self of the self-subjugated and serene-minded, is ever undisturbed in heat and cold, pleasure and pain, as well as in honor and dishonor.

8. He who is satisfied with wisdom and direct vision of Truth, who has conquered the senses and is ever undisturbed, to whom a lump of earth, a stone and gold are the same, that Yogi is said to be a Yukta (a saint of established wisdom).

9. He is esteemed who looks with equal regard upon well-wishers, friends, enemies, neutrals, a mediator, the hateful, relatives, upon the righteous and the unrighteous.

10. A Yogi[1] should constantly practise concentration of the heart, remaining in seclusion alone, subduing his body and mind and being free from longing and possession (sense of ownership).

11. In a cleanly spot having established his seat firmly, neither too high nor too low, with a cloth, skin and Kusha grass, placed one on the other;

12. Being seated there, making the mind one-pointed and subduing the activities of mind and senses, let him practise Yoga for self-purification.

13. Let him hold his body, head and neck erect and motionless, fixing the gaze on the tip of his nose, not looking around.[2]

14. Being serene-hearted and fearless, ever steadfast in the vow of Brahmacharya[3] and controlling the mind, let him sit steadfastly absorbed in thoughts of Me, regarding Me as his supreme goal.

15. Thus ever keeping himself steadfast, the Yogi of subdued mind attains eternal peace and freedom, which abide in Me.

16. But, O Arjuna, (the practice of) Yoga is not for him who eats too much or who does not eat at all, nor for him who sleeps too much or keeps awake (in excess).

17. He who is moderate in eating and recreation, moderate in his efforts in work, moderate in sleep and wakefulness (his practice of) Yoga becomes the destroyer of all misery.

[1] One who is striving for union with God through the practice of concentration and meditation.

[2] A form of concentration.

[3] Vow of godly life and continence.

18. When the mind, completely subdued, rests in Self alone, free from longing for all objects of desire, then he is said to be a Yukta (steadfast in Self-knowledge).

19. As a lamp placed in a windless spot does not flicker, the same simile is used to define a Yogi of subdued mind, practising union with the Self.

20. In that state, when the mind is completely subdued by the practice of Yoga and has attained serenity, in that state, seeing Self by the self, he is satisfied in the Self alone.

21. In that state, transcending the senses, he (the Yogi) feels that infinite bliss which is perceived by the purified understanding; knowing that and being established therein, he never falls back from his real state (of Self-knowledge);

22. After having attained which, no other gain seems greater; being established wherein, he is not overwhelmed even by great sorrow.

23. Know that (state) of separation from the contact with pain as Yoga. This Yoga should be practised with perseverance and undepressed heart.

24. Abandoning without reserve all the desires born of mental fancies, and restraining completely by the mind the entire group of the senses from all directions,

25. With understanding held by firmness, and mind established in the Self, let him (thus) by degrees attain tranquility; let him not think of anything else.

26. Wheresoever the restless and unsteady mind may wander away, let him withdraw it from there and bring it under the control of the Self alone.

27. He whose passions are quieted and mind perfectly tranquil, who has become one with Brahman, being freed from all impurities, to such a Yogi comes supreme bliss.

28. Thus constantly holding the mind steadfast, the Yogi, whose sins are shaken off, easily attains the infinite bliss, born of contact with Brahman.

29. He whose heart is steadfastly engaged in Yoga, looks everywhere with the eyes of equality, seeing the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self.

30. He who sees Me in all and all in Me, from him I vanish not, nor does he vanish from Me.

31. He who, being established in unity, worships Me dwelling in all beings, that Yogi, howsoever living, abides in Me.

32. O Arjuna, he who looks upon pleasure and pain everywhere with the same regard as when it is applied to himself, that Yogi is highly esteemed.

Arjuna said:

33. O Destroyer of Madhu (Krishna), this Yoga, which has been declared by Thee as even-mindedness, I do not see (the possibility) of its lasting existence, owing to the restlessness of the mind.

34. O Krishna, the mind is restless, turbulent, strong and unyielding; I consider it as difficult to subdue as the wind.

The Blessed Lord said:

35. Doubtless, O mighty-armed, the mind is restless and difficult to control; but O son of Kunti, through practice and dispassion (renunciation) it can be conquered.

36. Yoga is difficult to attain by him who is of uncontrolled self: such is my conviction; but the self-subjugated can attain it by following the right means.

Arjuna said:

37. O Krishna, he who, though possessed with faith, yet lacks in control and whose mind wanders away from Yoga, what end does he meet, failing to reach perfection in Yoga?

38. O Mighty-armed (Krishna), does he not perish like a rent cloud, supportless, fallen from both (here and hereafter), deluded in the path of Brahman (Truth)?

39. O Krishna, this doubt of mine Thou oughtest to dispel, for there is none but Thee who is able to destroy this doubt.

The Blessed Lord said:

40. O Pārtha, there is no destruction for him either here or hereafter, for the well-doer (devotee), O Beloved, never comes to an evil end.

41. One who is fallen from Yoga, after having attained the regions of the righteous and dwelling there for unlimited time, reincarnates in the house of the pure and prosperous.

42. Or else he is born in the family of wise Yogis; but such a birth is very rare to obtain in this world.

43. O descendant of Kuru, there (in that incarnation) he gains the knowledge acquired in his previous incarnation, and he strives again more (fervently) than before for perfection.

44. He is irresistibly led by the previous practice (of Yoga). Even the enquirer of Yoga goes beyond the letter-Brahman.[1]

45. But the Yogi, striving with perseverance, purified from all sin, perfected through many births, reaches the supreme goal.

46. The Yogi is superior to ascetics, and superior to those who have attained wisdom through books; he is also superior to performers of action (according to the Scriptures). Therefore, O Arjuna! be thou a Yogi.

47. And among all the Yogis, to Me he is the highest, who, with his inner self absorbed in Me, worships Me with (unflinching) faith.

Here ends the Sixth Chapter called
"Dhyāna-Yoga, or The Path of Meditation"

CHAPTER VII

The Blessed Lord said:

1. O Pārtha, practising Yoga, with thy mind fixed on Me and taking refuge in Me, do thou hear how without doubt thou shalt know Me fully.

2. I shall declare unto thee without reserve this knowledge (speculative) and wisdom (practical), having known which nothing more here (in this world) remains to be known.

3. Among thousands of human beings, scarcely one strives for perfection; and among (the thousands of) faithful strivers after perfection, scarcely one knows Me in truth.

4. Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect, egotism, thus my Prakriti (Nature) is divided eightfold.

5. This Prakriti is inferior; but different from this, know thou, mighty-armed, my higher Prakriti in the form of life-consciousness, by which this universe is supported.

6. Know that all beings are generated from these two (Prakritis). I am the origin and also the dissolution of the entire universe.

7. O Dhananjaya (Arjuna), there is naught else (existing) higher than I. Like pearls on a thread, all this (universe) is strung in Me.

[1] The performance of rites and rituals given in the Scriptures.

8. O son of Kunti, I am the sapidity in waters and the radiance in sun and moon, I am Om[1] in all the Vedas, sound in Akāsha (ether), self-consciousness in mankind.

9. I am the sacred fragrance in earth and brilliance in fire; I am the life in all beings and austerity in ascetics.

10. Know Me, O Pārtha, as the eternal seed of all beings. I am the intellect of the intelligent and the prowess of the powerful.

11. O mighty of the Bharata race, of the strong I am the strength, devoid of desire and attachment; I am (also) desire in all beings, unopposed to Dharma (spiritual duty).

12. Whatever conditions there are pertaining to the states of Sattwa (quality of goodness), Rajas (passion), Tamas (ignorance, inertia), know them all to proceed from Me. I am not in them, but they are in Me.

13. Being deluded by these states, composed of the three Gunas (qualities), all this world does not know Me, who am beyond these and immutable.

14. Verily this divine Māyā of mine (elusive mystery), composed of Gunas, is difficult to surmount; those who take refuge in Me alone, they cross over this Māyā.

15. The deluded, evil-doers, the lowest of men, robbed of understanding by Māyā and following demonic tendencies, do not attain unto Me.

16. O Prince of the Bharata race, O Arjuna, four kinds of virtuous men worship Me: the distressed, the seeker of knowledge, the seeker of material prosperity and the wise.

17. Among them the wise, ever steadfast, devoted to the One (to Me), excels; for I am supremely dear to the wise and he is dear to Me.

18. Noble are all these, but I regard the wise as my very Self; for with soul ever steadfast, he is established in Me alone as his supreme goal.

19. At the end of many births the man of wisdom comes unto Me, seeing that all this is (pervaded by) one Self. Such a great-souled one is very difficult to find.

20. Those whose discrimination is stolen away by diverse desires, worship other deities by observing various external rites (with the hope of gaining pleasure, power, etc.), being impelled by their own nature.

21. Whatever devotee seeks to worship whatever (Divine) form with faith, I make his faith unwavering.

22. Possessed with that faith, he engages himself in worship of (that

[1] The Pranava or Word-God. The same as the *Logos* of Christian theology.

deity); and from that he gains the desired results, those being granted by Me alone.

23. But the fruit (acquired) by these men of small understanding is limited and perishable. The worshippers of the Devas (bright ones) go to the Devas; but my devotees come unto Me.

24. The ignorant, not knowing my Eternal, Immutable and Supreme state, consider Me as the unmanifested coming into manifestation.

25. I am not manifest to all, being veiled by Yoga-Māyā.[1] This deluded world knows Me not, the Unborn and Immutable.

26. O Arjuna, I know the past, present and future of all beings, but no one knows Me.

27. O Bhārata, terror of thy foes, all beings at birth fall into delusion, caused by the pairs of opposites, arising from desire and aversion.

28. But those men of virtuous deeds, whose sin has come to an end, freed from the delusion of the pairs of opposites, worship Me with firm resolve.

29. Those who, having taken refuge in Me, strive to attain freedom from old age and death, they know Brahman, the whole of the individual Self and the entire realm of Karma (action).

30. Those who know Me in the physical realm, in the Divine realm and in the realm of sacrifice, being steadfast in heart, they know Me even at the time of death.

Here ends the Seventh Chapter called
"Jnāna-Vijnāna-Yoga, or The Path of
Wisdom and Realization"

CHAPTER VIII

Arjuna said:

1. O Best of Beings (Krishna), what is Brahman, what is Adhyātma (embodied soul), and what is Karma? What is the physical realm (Adhibhuta), and what is called the Divine realm (Adhidaiva)?

2. O Destroyer of Madhu, how and who dwells in this body as Adhiyajna (deity of sacrifice); and how art Thou known at the time of death by the self-subjugated ones?

[1] Delusion composed of the three Gunas.

The Blessed Lord said:

3. The Imperishable Supreme Being is Brahman, its manifestation as the embodied soul is called Adhyātman. The prescribed sacrifice, which causes the creation and support of beings, is called Karma.

4. O best of the embodied (Arjuna), perishable existence is called Adhibhuta (the physical); the Supreme Self is the Adhidaivata (Universal Spirit). I am the Adhiyajna (the presiding deity of sacrifice) in the body.

5. He who, at the time of death, thinking of Me alone, goes forth, leaving the body, he attains unto my Being. There is no doubt in this.

6. O son of Kunti, whatever state (or being) one dwells upon in the end, at the time of leaving the body, that alone he attains, because of his constant thought of that state or being.

7. Therefore, at all times, think of Me and fight (perform actions). Having offered thy mind and intellect to Me, thou shalt without doubt come unto Me.

8. O son of Prithā, by the steadfast practice of meditation with unwavering mind (not moving elsewhere) and constant thought of the Supreme Divine Being, one goes to Him.

9. He who thinks upon the Omniscient, the Ancient, the Ruler, the minutest of the minute, the Sustainer of all, whose form is inconceivable, Self-effulgent like the sun, and beyond the darkness (of ignorance);

10. (He who thus meditates on Him) at the time of death, with unflinching mind, possessed with devotion, fully fixing the Prāna (life-breath) between the eyebrows by the power of Yoga, he attains to the Supreme Divine Being.

11. That which the knowers of Veda (Truth, Wisdom) speak of as imperishable, that which the unattached Sannyāsins [1] enter into, by desiring which they practise Brahmacharya,[2] that state I shall declare unto thee in brief.

12. Closing all the gates of the senses, confining the mind in the heart, and fixing the Prāna in the head (between the eyebrows), thus engaged in the practice of concentration (Yoga);

13. Uttering the monosyllable "Om," (the sound) Brahman, and meditating on Me, he who departs, leaving his body, he attains the supreme goal.

[1] Self-controlled renouncers.
[2] Life of continence and purity.

14. He who is without any other thought (but Me), who remembers Me daily and constantly, O Pārtha, I am easily attained by that ever-devoted Yogi.

15. The great-souled ones, having reached Me, do not come to re-birth, the ever-changing abode of misery, for they have attained the highest perfection.

16. O Arjuna, all worlds, from the abode of Brahmā to this world, are subject to return; but, O son of Kunti, after having attained Me, there is no re-birth.

17. Those who know that Brahmā's day ends in a thousand Yugas (ages) and his night in a thousand Yugas, they are the true knowers of the night and day.

18. At the approach of (Brahmā's) day, all manifestations proceed from the Unmanifested, and at the approach of the night, they merge into that which is called the Unmanifested.[1]

19. O Pārtha, the multitude of beings, coming into birth again and again, helplessly merge into (the Unmanifested) at the approach of night and again remanifest at the approach of day.

20. But beyond this Unmanifested, there is another Unmanifested, which is eternally existent and is not destroyed even when all beings are destroyed.

21. That which has been described as Unmanifested and Imperishable is called the Highest Goal, having attained which there is no return (re-births). That is my Supreme Abode.

22. O son of Prithā, that Supreme Self, in whom all beings abide and by whom all this is pervaded, can be attained by whole-hearted and exclusive devotion to Him.

23. O Prince of the Bharata race, now I shall declare to thee that time, at which in departing (leaving the body) the Yogis return (to re-birth), and also that time at which in departing they do not return.

24. Fire, light, day-time, the bright fortnight (ascending moon), the six months of the sun's northern course, departing at such time, the knowers of Brahman go to Brahman.

25. Smoke, night-time, the dark fortnight (waning moon), the six months of the sun's southern course, the Yogi departing at such time and receiving the lunar light, returns.

[1] These two verses signify the evolution and involution of the sum-total of Cosmic energy, represented by Brahmā's day and night.

26. These two are considered as eternal paths of the world, the bright and the dark (path of wisdom and path of ignorance). By one, (man) attains to non-return (freedom); by the other, he returns again.

27. O son of Prithā, by knowing these (two) paths, the Yogis are never deluded. Therefore, O Arjuna, in all times be thou steadfastly engaged in Yoga.

28. Whatever fruits of good deeds are promised in the study of the Vedas, in sacrifices, in the practice of austerities, in charitable gifts, the Yogi, having known these and rising above all, attains to the primeval Supreme Abode.

Here ends the Eighth Chapter called
"Akshara-Brahma-Yoga, or The Path of the
Imperishable Brahman"

CHAPTER IX

The Blessed Lord said:

1. (Now) I shall declare to thee, who art without evil thought, this great secret, wisdom together with realization, knowing which thou shalt be freed from evil.

2. This is the king of sciences, king of secrets, the supreme purifier; it is realized by direct perception and is endowed with righteousness, easily performed and imperishable.

3. O Parantapa (Arjuna), the men who have no faith in this Dharma (science of Self-knowledge), without attaining Me, return to the path of death and re-birth.

4. By My unmanifested Form all this world is pervaded; all beings dwell in Me, but I do not dwell in them.

5. Behold My Divine Yoga! Beings do not dwell in Me; (although) the Creator and Supporter of all beings, (yet) My Self dwells not in them.

6. As the air, vast and always moving everywhere, exists in Akāsha (space and ether), even so, know thou, all beings exist in Me.

7. O son of Kunti, all beings, at the end of a cycle, go back to my Prakriti (Nature); again, at the beginning of a cycle, I send them forth.

8. Ruling over My Prakriti, I send forth again and again this vast multitude of beings, who are helplessly impelled by Nature.

9. O conqueror of wealth (Arjuna), these acts (of creation and dissolution) do not bind Me, sitting as one unconcerned and unattached to these acts.

10. O son of Kunti, with Me as the presiding Deity, Prakriti (Nature) sends forth the moving and the unmoving. For this reason the world wheels round and round.

11. Fools, unaware of My Supreme state, as the great Lord of beings, disregard Me dwelling in human form.

12. They are of vain hopes, of vain deeds, of vain knowledge, and senseless, possessed with the deluding nature of Rākshasas (unclean, passionate and godless creatures) and Asuras (creatures of darkness and of ignorance).

13. But, O son of Kunti, the great-souled ones, possessing the Divine Nature, knowing Me as Immutable and as the Source of beings, worship Me with single-minded devotion.

14. Ever singing My glory and striving with steadfast vows, bowing down to Me in devotion, (they) perpetually worship Me.

15. Others again by performing the wisdom-sacrifice worship Me, the All-facing, as One, as separate, or in manifold forms.

16. I am Kratu,[1] I am Yajna,[2] I am Svadhā,[3] I am medicinal herbs, I am the Mantra,[4] I am the oblation, I am the fire and I am the act of sacrifice.

17. I am the Father of the universe, the Mother, the Sustainer, the Grandsire, the One to be known, the Purifier, Om (Sound-Brahman), the Rik, Saman and Yajur.[5]

18. (I am) the Way, the Supporter, the Lord, the Witness, the Abode, the Refuge, the Friend, the Origin, the Dissolution, the Resting-Place, the Storehouse and the Eternal Seed.

19. O Arjuna, I give heat, I send forth rain and withhold it; I am Immortality and also Death. I am being and non-being (the manifested and the unmanifested).

20. The knowers of the three Vedas,[6] having worshipped Me with sacrifice, drinking the Soma [7] and thus being purified from sin, pray for

[1] Certain Vedic rite.
[2] Sacrifice.
[3] Offering for the benefit of the departed ancestors.
[4] The sacred text, by repeating and meditating on which one is purified.
[5] Different branches of the Vedas.
[6] Mentioned in verse 17.
[7] Nectar, remnant of the sacrifice.

the goal of heaven; they, having reached the region of the ruler of the Devas, enjoy in heaven the celestial pleasures of the Devas.

21. Having enjoyed that vast celestial world, they, at the exhaustion of the merit (of their good deeds), again enter into the mortal world; thus following the religion of the three Vedas, with the craving for objects of desire, they attain coming and going (birth and re-birth).

22. Those who worship Me and meditate on Me without any other thought, to these ever steadfast devotees I secure safety and supply all their needs (I carry their burden).

23. O son of Kunti, even those devotees who worship other gods with faith, they too worship Me, but contrary to the law.

24. For I am alone the Enjoyer and Lord of all sacrifice; but they do not know Me in truth, hence they return (fall into re-birth).

25. The worshippers of the gods go to the gods; to the ancestors go the ancestor-worshippers; the spirit-worshippers go to the spirits; but My worshippers come unto Me.

26. He who, with devotion offereth to Me a leaf, a flower, a fruit and water, that love-offering I accept, made by the pure-hearted.

27. Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou offerest as oblation, whatever thou givest and the austerities thou performest, O son of Kunti, do that as an offering to Me.

28. Thus thou shalt be freed from the bonds of action that bears good and evil fruit; and thy soul, being steadfastly engaged in this devotion of renunciation, liberated thou shalt come unto me.

29. Alike am I to all beings; hated or beloved there is none to Me. But those who worship Me with devotion, they are in Me and I am in them.

30. Even if the most wicked worships Me with undivided devotion, he should be regarded as good, for he is rightly resolved.

31. Very soon he becomes a righteous soul and attains to eternal peace Know thou, O son of Kunti, that my devotee never perishes.

32. O Pārtha, even those who are of inferior birth,—women, Vaishyas (merchant class) and Sudras (servant class),—even they, by taking refuge in Me, attain to the Supreme Goal.

33. What need is there, then, to speak of the holy Brāhmanas and the royal Sages![1] Having come into this transitory and joyless world, do thou worship Me.

[1] How much more easily is the goal attained by them.

34. Fill thy mind with Me, be thou My devotee, worship Me and bow down to Me; thus, steadfastly uniting thy heart with Me alone and regarding Me as thy Supreme Goal, thou shalt come unto Me.

Here ends the Ninth Chapter called
"The Path of Royal Science
and Royal Secret"

CHAPTER X

The Blessed Lord said:

1. O mighty-armed, again do thou listen to My Supreme Word, which I, wishing thy welfare, declare unto thee who art rejoiced (to hear Me).

2. All the Devas know not My origin, nor do the great Rishis (Seers); for I am the Source of all the Devas and the great Rishis.

3. He who knows Me as birthless and beginningless, the Supreme Lord of the universe, he among mortals is undeluded and is freed from all sins.

4. Intelligence, wisdom, non-delusion, forgiveness, truth, control of the senses, serenity of the heart, pleasure and pain, birth and death, fear and fearlessness.

5. Non-injury, equanimity, contentment, austerity, benevolence, fame and infamy; these different states of beings arise from Me alone.

6. The seven great Rishis, the elder four[1] as well as the Manus, were born of My mind and endowed with My nature, from whom (are generated) all these creatures in the world.

7. He who comprehends in reality these My various manifestations and My Yoga power, he becomes well-established in unshakable Yoga. There is no doubt in this.

8. I am the Origin of all, everything evolves from Me. Knowing this, the wise worship Me with loving ecstasy.

9. With their heart fixed on Me, with their life absorbed in Me, mutually enlightening (one another), and perpetually singing My glory, they are contented and rejoiced.

10. To these ever steadfast and loving worshippers, I give that Yoga of wisdom by which they come unto Me.

11. Out of pure compassion for them, I, dwelling in their hearts, destroy the darkness born of ignorance, by the effulgent light of wisdom.

[1] Elder than the seven.

Arjuna said:

12–13. Thou art the Supreme Brahman, the Supreme Abode and Supreme Purity. All the Rishis (Sages), the divine sage Nārada, as well as Asita, Devala and Vyāsa, have declared Thee as the Eternal and Self-effulgent Being, the primeval Deity, unborn and all-pervading; and Thou Thyself declarest to me the same.

14. O Keshava (Krishna), I regard all that Thou sayest to me as true. O Blessed Lord, neither the Devas nor the Dānavas (demi-gods) know Thy manifestations.

15. O Supreme Being, O Source of beings, O Lord of beings, O God of gods, O Ruler of the universe, Thou Thyself alone knowest Thyself by Thyself.

16. (O Lord), Thou oughtest to tell me, without reserve, of Thy Divine manifestations, by which Divine attributes Thou abidest, pervading all the worlds.

17. O Yogin (Krishna), how by constantly meditating on Thee shall I know Thee? O Blessed Lord, in what aspects art Thou to be meditated upon by me?

18. O Janārdana (Krishna), tell me again in detail of Thy Yoga power and Divine attributes, for I am never satiated in listening to Thy words of nectar.

The Blessed Lord said:

19. O best of the Kurus, I shall declare to thee My principal Divine attributes, for there is no end to the vastness of My manifestations.

20. O Gudākesha (Arjuna), I am the Self existing in the heart of all beings. I am the beginning, the middle and also the end of beings.

21. I am Vishnu of the Adityas, of the luminaries I am the radiant Sun, among the winds I am Marichi, among the constellations I am the Moon.

22. Of the Vedas I am the Sāma-Veda, and of the Devas I am Vāsava (Indra). Of the senses I am the mind and I am the consciousness of all living beings.

23. Of the Rudras I am Sankara; I am the Lord of wealth of the Yakshas and Rākshasas; of the Vasus I am the Fire-god; I am Meru among the mountains.

24. O Pārtha, know Me to be Brihaspati, the high priest; of generals, I am Skanda; among waters, I am the ocean.

25. I am Bhrigu among the great Rishis; of words, I am the monosyllable "Om." Of Yajnas (sacrifices), I am Japa;[1] of the immovable, I am the Himālaya.

26. I am Aswattha among all the trees; among the divine Rishis, I am Nārada. I am Chitraratha of the Gandharvas;[2] I am the sage Kapila[3] among the perfected ones.

27. Among horses, know Me as Uchchaisrava, born of nectar; and of the lordly elephants as Airāvata, and among men as Monarch.

28. I am the Thunderbolt among weapons; among cows, I am Kāmadhuk. I am Kandarpa, the cause of offspring; and of serpents, I am Vāsuki.

29. I am Ananta among the snakes; I am Varuna among water-beings; of ancestors, I am Aryamā; I am Yama among rulers.

30. I am Prahlāda among the Daityas; of measures, I am Time; among wild beasts, I am the lord of beasts (the lion); and among birds, I am Vainateya.

31. Among purifiers, I am the wind; among warriors, I am Rāma; among fishes, I am Makara (shark); and among rivers, I am the Ganges.

32. O Arjuna, of all creations I am the beginning, the middle and also the end; of all the sciences, I am the science of Self-knowledge; among the disputants, I am Vāda.[4]

33. Of syllables, I am "A," and Dvandva[5] of all compound words. I am inexhaustible Time; I am the Dispenser (of fruits of actions), facing everywhere.

34. I am all-seizing Death; I am the origin of all that is to be; of the female I am fame, prosperity, speech, memory, intelligence, constancy and forgiveness.

35. I am the Brihat-sāman of the Vedic hymns; I am Gāyatri[6] of metres. Of months I am Mārgashirsha and of seasons I am the flowering season.

36. I am gambling among the fraudulent; I am the prowess of the powerful. I am Victory, I am Perseverance, I am the Goodness of the good.

37. Of the Vrishnis I am Vāsudeva; among the Pāndavas I am

[1] Silent repetition of the sacred text.
[2] Celestial musicians.
[3] Founder of the Sankya system of philosophy.
[4] Truth-seeking arguments.
[5] Copulative.
[6] A verse of twenty-four syllables.

Dhananjaya; among the saints I am Vyāsa and among the sages I am Ushanā.

38. I am the Rod of disciplinarians; I am the Polity of the seekers of conquest. I am the Silence of secrets; I am the Wisdom of the wise.

39. O Arjuna, whatever is the seed of all beings, that also am I. Without Me there is no being existent, whether moving or unmoving.

40. O Parantapa, there is no end to the manifestations of My Divine Power; what I have declared is only a partial statement of the vastness of my Divine manifestation.

41. Whatever being there is, glorious, prosperous or powerful, know thou that to have sprung from a portion of My splendor.

42. O Arjuna, what need is there for thee to know these details? I alone exist, sustaining this whole universe by a portion of Myself.

Here ends the Tenth Chapter called
"Vibhuti-Yoga, or The Path of
Divine Manifestation"

CHAPTER XI

Arjuna said:

1. The supremely profound word regarding Self-knowledge, spoken by Thee out of compassion for me, has dispelled this my delusion.

2. O Lotus-Eyed (Krishna), I have heard at length from Thee of the creation and dissolution of beings, as well as of Thine inexhaustible glory.

3. O Great Lord, as Thou hast declared Thyself, so it is. O Supreme Being, I desire to see Thy Godly Form.

4. O Lord, if Thou thinkest me able (worthy) to see that (Form), then, O Lord of Yogis, show me Thine Infinite Self.

The Blessed Lord said:

5. Behold, O Pārtha, My various celestial Forms, of different colors and shapes, by hundreds and by thousands.

6. O descendant of Bharata, behold the Adityas, the Rudras, the Vasus, the twin Asvins and the Maruts.[1] Behold many wonders that were not seen before.

[1] Names for celestial beings.

7. O Gudākesha (Arjuna), behold in this body of Mine the entire universe together, with all that is moving and unmoving and whatever else thou desirest to perceive.

8. But with these eyes of thine thou canst not see Me; therefore I give thee Divine sight. Behold my Supreme Yoga power!

Sanjaya said:

9. O King, having spoken thus, the great Lord of Yoga, Hari (Krishna), then showed to Pārtha His Supreme Godly Form.

10. With many faces and eyes, with many wondrous sights, with many celestial ornaments and with many celestial weapons uplifted,

11. Wearing celestial garlands and garments, anointed with celestial fragrant perfumes; the all-wonderful Deity, infinite, facing the universe everywhere.

12. If the effulgence of a thousand suns were to shine at once in the sky, that might resemble the splendor of that great Being.

13. Then the son of Pāndu (Arjuna) saw the entire universe resting together, with its manifold divisions, in the body of the God of gods.

14. Then Dhananjaya, overpowered with wonder, and his hair standing on end, bending down his head in awe to the Deity, spoke with folded hands:

Arjuna said:

15. O God! in Thy body I see all the gods, as well as multitudes of all kinds of beings; the Lord Brahmā, seated on the lotus throne, all the Rishis and all the celestial serpents.

16. O Lord of the universe, O Universal Form, I see Thee with manifold arms, bellies, mouths and eyes, boundless on every side; neither do I see Thy beginning, nor middle nor end.

17. I see Thee with diadems, maces, discus, shiningly effulgent everywhere, blazing all around like the burning fire and the sun, dazzling to the sight and immeasurable.

18. Thou art the Imperishable, the Supreme, the One to be known. Thou art the Supreme Refuge of this universe; Thou art the ever unchanging Guardian of the Eternal Dharma (religion); Thou art, I know, the Ancient Being.

19. I see Thee without beginning, middle or end, with infinite power, with numberless arms, the sun and moon as Thine eyes, Thy mouth as the blazing fire, heating this universe with Thine own radiance.

20. By Thee alone the space between heaven and earth and all the quarters is pervaded. O Great Soul, seeing this, Thy wonderful and terrifying Form, the three worlds are stricken with fear.

21. Verily, these hosts of Devas are entering into Thee; some in fear, praising Thee with folded hands. The host of great Rishis and Siddhas, saying "Svasti" (peace, may it be well), are singing Thy glory in beautiful hymns.

22. The Rudras, Adityas, Vasus, Sadhyas, the Visvas, the Asvins, the Maruts, the Ushmapās, the host of Gandharvas, Yakshas, Asuras, Siddhas, they are all looking at Thee wonderstruck.

23. O Mighty-armed, seeing Thine immeasurable form, with many mouths and eyes, with many arms, thighs and feet, with many loins, and fearful with many large teeth, the worlds and I, as well, are agitated with terror.

24. O Vishnu, seeing Thee touching the sky, shining in many colors, with mouths wide open, and with large blazing eyes, my heart is terrified and I find neither peace nor tranquillity.

25. O Lord of gods! seeing Thy mouths, terrible with long teeth, blazing like the fires of destruction, I know not the four quarters, nor do I find any peace. Have mercy, O Abode of the universe!

26. All these sons of Dhritarāshtra, with the multitude of monarchs, Bhishma, Drona and Sutaputra (Karna), as well as our own principal warriors,

27. Enter rushingly into Thy mouths, terrible with long teeth and fearful to look at. Some are seen hanging between Thy teeth, with their heads crushed to powder.

28. As the many torrents of rivers rush towards the ocean, similarly do these heroes amongst men enter into Thy mouths, blazing fiercely on all sides.

29. As the moths rush into the burning fire with headlong speed for destruction, in the same manner do these creatures rush into Thy mouths with headlong speed, only to perish.

30. O Vishnu! swallowing all the worlds with Thy blazing flames, Thou art licking all around. Thy fierce, radiant rays, filling the whole universe, are burning.

31. Tell me, who art Thou, in this terrible Form? Salutation to Thee! O Supreme Deity, have mercy! O Primeval One, I desire to know Thee, for indeed I know not Thy purpose.

The Blessed Lord said:

32. I am eternal, world-destroying Time, manifested here for the destruction of these people. Even without Thee, none of these warriors, arrayed here in the hostile armies, shall live.

33. Therefore, do thou arise and acquire glory. Conquering the enemies, enjoy the unrivalled kingdom. By Me alone have they already been slain; be thou merely an instrumental cause, O Savyasāchin[1] (Arjuna).

34. Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha, Karna, as well as the other brave warriors, are already slain by Me. Do thou kill and be not distressed by fear. Fight! and thou shalt conquer thine enemies in battle.

Sanjaya said:

35. Having heard these words of Keshava (Krishna), (Arjuna) the diadem-wearer, with folded hands, trembling, prostrating himself, again spoke to Krishna in a choked voice, bowing down, overwhelmed with fear.

Arjuna said:

36. O Lord of the senses (Krishna), it is right that the world delights and rejoices in Thy glory. The Rākshasas (demonic creatures) fly with fear in all directions and the host of Siddhas bow down to Thee in adoration.

37. Why should they not bow down to Thee, O Mighty Being, O Infinite One, O Lord of the gods, O Abode of the universe, greater than Brahmā and even the primeval cause of Brahmā; for Thou art the Imperishable; (Thou art) Existence and Non-existence and all that is beyond.

38. O boundless Form, Thou art the Primeval Deity, the Ancient Being, Thou art the Supreme Refuge of this universe; Thou art the Knower, the One to be known and the Supreme Abode. By Thee alone is this universe pervaded.

39. Thou art Vāyu, Yama, Agni, Varuna, the Moon; Thou art the Lord of creatures and the great Grandsire. Salutations to Thee, my salutations a thousand times, again and again my salutations to Thee!

40. Salutations to Thee before, salutations to Thee behind, salutations

[1] Who could shoot arrows even with his left hand.

to Thee on all sides! O All, infinite in power, and immeasurable in valor, Thou pervadest all, therefore Thou art All.

41. Not knowing this Thy glory and regarding Thee merely as a friend, whatever I may have said presumptuously, out of either carelessness or fondness, addressing Thee as "O Krishna," "O Yādava," "O Friend";

42. O Changeless One, in whatever manner I may have been disrespectful to Thee, in jesting, in walking, in reposing, sitting, or at meals, alone, or in the presence of others; O Unfathomable One, I implore Thee to forgive all that.

43. Thou art the Father of the moving and unmoving world, and its object of worship; greater than the great, O Incomparable Power, no one in the three worlds exists equal to Thee. How can, then, anyone excell Thee?

44. O Adorable Lord! prostrating my body in adoration, I beg Thy forgiveness. O God, as a father forgives his son, a friend his dear friend, a beloved one his love, even so do Thou forgive me!

45. O God, joyous am I to have seen (Thy form) which I never saw before; yet my heart is agitated with terror, therefore show me that Form of Thine. O God of gods! O Abode of the universe, have mercy.

46. I desire to see Thee as before, with diadem, mace and discus. O Universal Form of thousand arms, do Thou manifest Thyself in that same Four-armed Form (form of Vishnu).

The Blessed Lord said:

47. O Arjuna, mercifully have I shown thee this Supreme Form by My own Yoga power. This effulgent, infinite, primeval, great universal Form of Mine, which has not been seen by anyone else before thee.

48. O great hero of the Kurus, not by the study of the sacred Vedas or by sacrifice, not by charity or rituals, not by severe austerities, am I visible in such Form in this world of men to any other than thee.

49. Be not frightened, nor bewildered, having seen this terrific Form of Mine, getting rid of thy fear and with gladdened heart, behold thou again this My former Form.

Sanjaya said:

50. Vāsudeva (Krishna), having thus spoken to Arjuna, showed again His own Form. The Great-souled One, having assumed again His gentle Form, pacified him (Arjuna) who was terrified.

Arjuna said:

51. O Janārdana, seeing this, Thy gentle human Form, now my thoughts are collected and I have recovered myself.

The Blessed Lord said:

52. This Form of Mine which thou hast seen is very difficult to perceive; even gods ever long to behold this Form.

53. Neither by the Vedas, nor by austerities, nor by charitable gifts, nor by sacrifice, can I be seen as thou hast seen Me,

54. But by single-hearted devotion alone I can be known in this manner, O Arjuna, and perceived in reality and also entered into, O Parantapa.

55. O Pāndava, he who works for Me, has Me for his highest goal, is devoted to Me, is free from attachment and bears enmity towards no creature, he enters into Me.

Here ends the Eleventh Chapter called
"Vishya-Rupa-Darsanam, or The
Vision of the Universal Form"

CHAPTER XII

Arjuna said:

1. Those devotees who, ever steadfast, thus worship Thee and those who worship the Unmanifested Imperishable, which of them are better knowers of Yoga?

The Blessed Lord said:

2. Those who, fixing their minds on Me, worship Me with perpetual devotion, endowed with supreme faith, to My mind they are the best knowers of Yoga.

3. But those who contemplate the Imperishable, the Undefinable, Unmanifested, Omnipresent, Unthinkable, Unchangeable, Immovable and Eternal,

4. Having subdued all the senses, even-minded everywhere, and engaged in doing good to all beings, verily they attain unto Me.

5. Greater is their difficulty whose minds are set on the Unmanifested,

for the goal of the Unmanifested is very arduous for the embodied to attain.

6. But those who, surrendering all actions to Me and regarding Me as the Supreme Goal, worship Me with single-hearted devotion,

7. For them whose hearts are thus fixed on Me, O son of Prithā, I become ere long the Saviour from the ocean of mortal Samsāra (world of birth and death).

8. Fix thy mind on Me alone and rest thine understanding in Me, thus thou shalt doubtlessly live in Me hereafter.

9. O Dhananjaya, if thou art unable to fix thy mind steadfastly on Me, then, by faithful practice of devotion, do thou seek to reach Me.

10. If thou art also unable to practise devotion, then be thou intent on working for Me. Even by performing actions for My sake, thou shalt attain perfection.

11. If thou art not able to do even this, then, taking refuge in Me alone, and self-controlled, do thou surrender the fruits of all actions.

12. Knowledge is indeed better than blind practice; meditation excels knowledge; surrender of the fruits of action is more esteemed than meditation. Peace immediately follows surrender.

13. He who hates no creature and is friendly and compassionate to all, who is free from attachment and egotism, equal-minded in pleasure and pain, and forgiving,

14. Who is ever content and meditative, self-subjugated and possessed with firm conviction, with mind and intellect dedicated to Me, he who is thus devoted to Me is dear to Me.

15. He by whom the world is not afflicted and who is not afflicted by the world, who is free from elation, envy, fear and anxiety, he is dear to Me.

16. He who is free from all external dependence, pure, efficient, unattached, undisturbed, and has given up all (selfish) undertakings, he who is thus devoted to Me is dear to Me.

17. He who neither rejoices, nor hates, nor sorrows, nor desires and who has renounced good and evil, he who is thus full of devotion is dear to Me.

18. He who is the same to friend and foe and also in honor and dishonor, the same in heat and cold, pleasure and pain, free from all attachment,

19. He who is alike in praise and blame, is silent, content with everything, homeless, steady-minded, such a devoted soul is dear to Me.

20. Those who follow this immortal Dharma (teaching) as declared (by Me) and who are possessed with faith, regarding Me as the Supreme Goal, such devotees are exceedingly dear to Me.

Here ends the Twelfth Chapter called
"Bhakti-Yoga, or The Path of Devotion"

CHAPTER XIII

[*Arjuna said:* O Keshava, Prakriti (Nature) and Purusha (Self), Kshetra and the knower of Kshetra, knowledge and that which ought to be known, these I desire to learn.]

The Blessed Lord said:

1. O son of Kunti, this body is called Kshetra (field), the wise call the knower of it as Kshetrajna (knower of the field).

2. O descendant of Bharata, know Me to be the Kshetrajna (conscious Soul) in all Kshetras (bodies). To My mind, the knowledge of Kshetra (body) and Kshetrajna (Soul) is the true knowledge.

3. What the Kshetra (field) is, of what nature, what are its modifications, whence it arises; also who is he (knower, Soul) and what are his powers, do thou hear that from me in brief.

4. This truth has been sung by the Rishis (Seers) in various ways, in many different hymns, in Brahma-Sutra-Aphorisms, full of sound reasoning and conviction.

5. The great elements (earth, water, fire, air, ether), egoism, intellect, the Unmanifested (Nature), the ten organs (of sense and action) and the one (mind), the five sense-objects;

6. Desire, aversion, pleasure, pain, combination (of these), consciousness, fortitude, thus the Kshetra (body) has been briefly described with its modifications.

7. Humility, unostentatiousness, non-injuring, forgiveness, simplicity, service to the Guru (spiritual teacher), purity, steadfastness, self-control;

8. Renunciation of sense-objects as well as absence of egoism, realization of the evils of birth, death, old age, disease, pain;

9. Non-attachment, non-identification of self with son, wife, home and the rest; equal-mindedness in beneficial and non-beneficial happenings;

10. One-pointed and unwavering devotion to Me, resort to secluded places, distaste for assemblies;

11. Constant devotion to spiritual knowledge, realization of the essence of Truth, this is declared to be wisdom; what is opposed to this is ignorance.

12. I shall declare now that which is to be known, by knowing which one attains immortality. The Supreme Brahman is beginningless; It is said to be neither Sat (existence) nor Asat (non-existence).

13. With hands and feet everywhere, with eyes, heads and mouths everywhere and with ears everywhere in the universe, That alone exists enveloping all.

14. It shines through the functions of all the senses, and yet It is without senses; unattached, yet It sustains all; devoid of Gunas (qualities), yet It is the experiencer of Gunas.

15. It exists within and without all beings; It is unmoving as well as moving, incomprehensible because of Its subtlety; It is far and also near.

16. Indivisible, yet It exists as if divided in beings; It is to be known as the Sustainer of beings; It destroys and also generates.

17. It is the Light of lights and is said to be beyond darkness. It is knowledge, the One to be known, and the Goal of knowledge, dwelling in the hearts of all.

18. Thus Kshetra (field), knowledge and that which is to be known, have been told briefly. My devotee, knowing this, becomes fitted to enter into My Being (oneness with Me).

19. Know thou both Prakriti (Nature) and Purusha (Soul) to be without beginning. Know thou also that all the modifications and Gunas (qualities) are born of Prakriti.

20. Prakriti is said to be the productive source of cause and effect; while the embodied soul is the cause of experiences of pleasure and pain.

21. For the Purusha (Soul) experiences the Gunas, born of Prakriti; attachment to the Gunas is the cause of its birth in good and evil wombs.

22. The great Soul (that dwells) in this body is called the Witness or Looker-on, the Sanctioner, the Sustainer, the Experiencer, the mighty Lord and also the Supreme Self.

23. He who thus knows Purusha (Soul) and Prakriti (Nature) with the Gunas (qualities), howsoever he may be living, is not born again.

24. Some, by meditation, behold the Self by the self within themselves; others by the path of wisdom; still others by the path of action.

25. Others again, not possessing such knowledge themselves, worship as they have heard from others (illumined Souls); even they surmount death, by following with faith what they have heard.

26. O mighty of the Bharata race, whatever is born, whether moving or unmoving, know it to be (produced) from the union of Kshetra and Kshetrajna (Nature and Soul).

27. The Supreme Lord abides in all beings equally; (He is) undying in the dying: He who sees (thus) sees truly.

28. Seeing the same Lord existing everywhere equally, he does not hurt Self by the self and thus attains the highest goal.

29. And he who sees that all actions are being performed by Prakriti (Nature) alone and that the Self is not acting, he sees truly.

30. When he sees the separate existence of all beings established in One, and their expansion from that One alone, then he becomes Brahman (one with Brahman).

31. O son of Kunti, being without beginning and devoid of Gunas, the Supreme Self is immutable; though dwelling in the body, It neither acts nor is affected (by the fruits of action).

32. As the all-pervading ether (Akāsha) is not tainted, because of its subtlety, similarly this Self, (though) existing everywhere in the body, is not tainted.

33. O descendant of Bharata, as one sun illumines all this world, similarly He who dwells in the body illumines all bodies.

34. They who thus, by the eyes of wisdom, perceive the distinction between body and Soul, and the liberation of beings from Nature (Prakriti), they attain to the Supreme.

Here ends the Thirteenth Chapter called
"Yoga of Kshetra and Kshetrajna, or
The Path of Discrimination
between Body and Soul"

CHAPTER XIV

The Blessed Lord said:

1. Now I shall again declare unto thee that supreme wisdom, which is above all wisdom, by knowing which all the Sages after this life attain to the highest perfection.

2. Abiding by this wisdom, and having attained to My Being, neither do they come forth in evolution[1] nor are they affected in involution.[2]

3. O descendant of Bharata, the great Prakriti is My womb; in that I place the seed, from thence is the birth of all beings.

4. O son of Kunti, whatever forms are produced in all the wombs, the great Prakriti is the womb and I am the seed-giving Father.

5. O mighty-armed, Sattwa, Rajas, Tamas,[3] these Gunas (qualities), born of Prakriti, bind the immutable, embodied soul in the body.

6. O sinless one, of these (Gunas) Sattwa, being transparent, luminous and free from evil, binds (the embodied) by attachment to happiness and attachment to knowledge.

7. O son of Kunti, know thou Rajas to be of the nature of passion, giving rise to thirst (for pleasure) and attachment. It binds the embodied by attachment to action.

8. O Bhārata (Arjuna), know thou Tamas to be born of ignorance; it deludes all embodied beings and binds by false perception, indolence and sleep.

9. O Bhārata, Sattwa attaches one to happines; Rajas to action; while Tamas, covering wisdom, attaches one to false perception.

10. O Bhārata (sometimes) Sattwa predominates over Rajas and Tamas; (sometimes) Rajas predominates over Sattwa and Tamas; and (sometimes) Tamas over Sattwa and Rajas.

11. When through all the senses of this body the light of understanding shines forth, then it is to be known that Sattwa is predominant.

12. O Prince of the Bharata race, greed, (excessive) activity, enterprise, restlessness, longing, these prevail when Rajas is predominant.

13. O descendant of Kuru, darkness, inertia, false perception, and also delusion prevail when Tamas is predominant.

14. If the embodied meets with death when Sattwa is predominant, then he attains the spotless regions of the knowers of the Highest.

15. Meeting with death in Rajas, one is born among those attached to action; and dying in Tamas, one is born in the wombs of senseless beings.

16. The fruit of good deeds is declared to be Sāttwika and pure; the fruit of Rajas (passionate deeds) is pain; and ignorance is the fruit of Tamas.

[1] Creation.
[2] Dissolution.
[3] Goodness, passion, darkness.

17. Wisdom is born of Sattwa; greed, of Rajas; false perception, delusion and ignorance arise from Tamas.

18. The dwellers of Sattwa go upward; the Rājasic (of passionate natures) stay in the middle; and the Tāmasic, abiding in the functions of the lowest Guna, go downward.

19. When the Seer beholds no other agent than the Gunas, and knows also That which is higher than the Gunas, then he attains to My Being.

20. The embodied, having gone beyond these three Gunas, out of which the body is evolved, is liberated from birth, death, decay and pain, and attains to immortality.

Arjuna said:

21. O Lord, what are the signs of him who has gone beyond the three Gunaṣ? What are his characteristics and how does he go beyond these three Gunas?

The Blessed Lord said:

22. O Pāndava, he who neither hates the presence of illumination (Sattwa), activity (Rajas) or delusion (Tamas), nor craves for them when they are absent;

23. He who is seated unconcerned (like a witness) and is not moved by the Gunas, who is established and unshaken, knowing that the Gunas alone operate;

24. He who is alike in pleasure and pain; self-possessed; regarding alike a lump of earth, a stone and gold; who is the same in pleasant and unpleasant, in praise and blame, and steady;

25. He who is alike in honor and dishonor, the same to friend and foe, giving up all (selfish) undertakings, he is said to have crossed beyond the Gunas.

26. And he who, crossing over these Gunas, serves me with unwavering devotion, becomes fit to attain oneness with Brahman.

27. For I am the Abode of Brahman, the Immutable, the Immortal, the eternal Dharma and Absolute Bliss.

Here ends the Fourteenth Chapter called
"Distinction of the Three Gunas"

CHAPTER XV

The Blessed Lord said:

1. They speak of an eternal Ashwattha (tree), rooted above and branching below, whose leaves are the Vedas. He who knows it knows the Vedas.

2. Its branches are spread below and above, nourished by the Gunas; the sense-objects are its buds; its roots stretch down below in the world of men, creating actions.

3. Its form is not visible here, neither its end nor its origin, nor its basis. Having cut down this firm-rooted Ashwattha tree by the mighty sword of non-attachment,

4. Then that Goal is to be sought after, attaining which they (the wise) do not return again. I take refuge in that Primeval Being from which streams forth the Eternal (creative) Energy.

5. Free from pride and false conceit, the evil of attachment conquered, ever devoted to spiritual knowledge, desires completely pacified, liberated from the pairs of opposites known as pleasure and pain, the undeluded reach that eternal Goal.

6. That (Goal) the sun does not illumine, nor the moon, nor fire; going there, they (the wise) do not return. That is My Supreme Abode.

7. A portion of Myself has become the living Soul in the world of life from time without beginning. It draws the (five) senses and mind, the sixth (sense), which are in Prakriti.

8. When the Lord (Soul) obtains a body and when He leaves it, He takes these (senses and mind) and goes forth as the wind (goes forth), carrying away the scents from their seats (the flowers).

9. The embodied soul, presiding over the ear, eye, the sense of touch, of taste and smell, as well as over the mind, experiences sense-objects.

10. Either going forth from the body, or residing in it, or experiencing, or united with the Gunas, the deluded do not see It (the Soul); but those who have the eye of wisdom perceive It.

11. The self-subjugated perceive It, dwelling in themselves; but the impure-hearted and the unintelligent, even though striving, behold It not.

12. The light which resides in the sun, in the moon, in fire, and which illumines the whole world, know that light to be Mine.

13. Entering the earth with My energy, I support all beings and I nourish all the herbs, becoming the watery moon.

14. Dwelling in the body of living beings as Fire, I, being united with Prāna (ingoing breath) and Apāna (outgoing breath), digest four kinds of food.[1]

15. I am seated in the hearts of all, from Me alone comes memory, wisdom, and also their loss. I am that which is known in all the Vedas. Verily I am the Author of Vedanta and the knower of the Vedas am I.

16. There are two kinds of beings in the world: the perishable and the imperishable; all beings are perishable, but the Purusha (Self) is imperishable.

17. But there is another, the Highest Being, called the Supreme Self, who is the Immutable Lord, pervading the three worlds and supporting them.

18. As I am beyond the perishable and am above even the imperishable, therefore in the world and in the Veda I am known as the Supreme Being.

19. O descendant of Bharata, he who, free from delusion, thus knows Me as the Supreme Being, he, knowing all, worships Me with his whole heart.

20. Thus, O sinless Bhārata, has been declared by Me the most profound teaching, knowing this one attains enlightenment and the fulfillment of all duties.

Here ends the Fifteenth Chapter called
"The Path of the Supreme Being"

CHAPTER XVI

The Blessed Lord said:

1. Fearlessness, purity of heart, steadfastness in Yoga of Self-knowledge, charitable gifts, control of the senses, sacrifice, study of the Sacred Scriptures, austerity and simplicity,

2. Non-injury, truthfulness, absence of anger, renunciation, peace, absence of calumny, compassion to beings, non-covetousness, gentleness, modesty and absence of fickleness,

3. Vigor, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, absence of hatred and pride,

[1] Fourfold foods which require masticating, sucking, licking and swallowing or drinking.

these, O descendant of Bharata, belong to one born with the divine property.

4. O Pārtha, ostentatiousness, arrogance and self-conceit, anger as well as cruelty and ignorance, belong to one born with the demonic property.

5. The divine property is for liberation and the demonic for bondage. Grieve not, O Pāndava, thou art born with the divine property.

6. O Pārtha, in this world there are twofold manifestations of beings; the divine and the demonic. The divine has been described at length. Hear from Me now of the demonic state.

7. The demonic people know not how to follow right or how to refrain from wrong; there is neither purity, nor good conduct, nor truth in them.

8. They say that "this universe is without truth, without a basis, without God, born of mutual union caused by lust. What else is there?"

9. Holding this view, these ruined souls, of small understanding and of fierce deeds, rise as the enemies of the world for its destruction.

10. Filled with insatiable desires, possessed with hypocrisy, pride and arrogance, holding evil fancies through delusion, they work with unholy resolve;

11. Beset with immense cares, ending only in death; regarding sensual enjoyment as the highest and feeling sure that that is all there is;

12. Bound by a hundred ties of hope, given over to lust and anger, they strive to secure hoards of wealth by unjust means, for sensual gratification.

13. "This has been gained by me today and this desire I shall obtain, this is mine and this wealth also shall be mine."

14. "That enemy has been slain by me, others also shall I slay. I am the lord, I am the enjoyer, I am successful, powerful and happy."

15. "I am rich and well-born; who is equal to me? I shall sacrifice, I shall give, I shall rejoice": thus deluded by ignorance,

16. Bewildered by many fancies, enwrapped in the net of delusion, addicted to the gratification of the senses, they fall into a foul hell.

17. Self-glorifying, haughty, filled with the vanity and intoxication of wealth, they perform sacrifices (merely) in name out of hypocrisy, disregarding the Scriptural injunctions.

18. Possessed by egoism, power, insolence, lust and anger, these malignant people hate Me (dwelling) in their own bodies and in those of others.

19. I hurl these malignant and cruel evil doers, most degraded of men, into the wombs of Asuras [1] in the world (of birth and death).

20. O son of Kunti, entering into the Asuric (unclean) wombs and deluded birth after birth, without attaining Me they fall into a still lower state.

21. Lust, anger and greed, these three are the soul-destroying gates of hell. Therefore one should forsake these three.

22. O son of Kunti, he who is free from these three gates of darkness, practises what is good for his soul and thus attains the Supreme Goal.

23. He who, setting aside the injunctions of the Scriptures, follows the impulse of desire, attains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the highest goal.

24. Therefore let the Scriptures be thy authority in ascertaining what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Having learned the injunctions declared in the Scriptures, thou shouldst act here (in this world).

Here ends the Sixteenth Chapter called
"Distinction between the Divine and
the Demonic Property"

CHAPTER XVII

Arjuna said:

1. O Krishna, those who, disregarding the injunctions of the Scriptures, perform sacrifice with faith, what is their state? Is it Sattwa (goodness), Rajas (passion) or Tamas (darkness)?

The Blessed Lord said:

2. Threefold is the faith of the embodied, born of their inherent nature: Sāttwica (good), Rājasica (passionate), Tāmasica (ignorant). Do thou hear of that.

3. O descendant of Bharata, the faith of each is according to his inherent nature. The man consists of his faith; he is verily what his faith is.

4. The men of purity worship the gods; the men of passionate nature worship Yakshas and Rākshasas; while the others, men of Tāmasica (ignorant) nature, worship ghosts (departed spirits) and goblins.

[1] Unclean, cruel and godless creatures.

5. The men who practise severe austerities, not enjoined by the Scriptures, being possessed with hypocrisy and egoism, impelled by lust and attachment.

6. Torturing, senseless as they are, all the organs of the senses and Me, dwelling in the body, know them to be of demonic resolve.

7. The foods also are of threefold nature which are liked respectively by each of these; and so also sacrifice, austerity and charitable gifts. Do thou hear the distinction of these.

8. The foods which increase life-force, energy, strength, health, joy and cheerfulness, and which are savory, soothing, substantial and agreeable, are liked by the Sāttwica nature.

9. The Rājasica nature likes foods which are bitter, sour, saline, overhot, pungent, dry, burning, and which produce pain, grief and disease.

10. That which is stale, insipid, putrid, cooked over night, even leavings or unclean food is liked by the Tāmasica nature.

11. That sacrifice is Sāttwica which is performed by men desiring no fruit, as it is enjoined by the Scriptural laws, with the mind fixed on the sacrifice alone, just for its own sake.

12. But, O best of the Bharatas, that which is performed with the desire for fruits and for ostentation, know that to be Rājasica sacrifice.

13. The sacrifice which is performed, without regard to Scriptural injunctions, in which no food is distributed, and which is without sacred texts, charitable gifts and faith, is said to be Tāmasica.

14. Worship of the gods, of the twice-born,[1] of Gurus[2] and wise men; purity, simplicity, continence, non-injury; these are called the austerity of the body.

15. Speech, which causes no pain (to others) and is true as well as pleasant and beneficial; regular study of the Scriptures: these are called the austerity of speech.

16. Cheerfulness of mind, kindliness, silence, self-control, purity of heart: these are called austerity of the mind.

17. When this threefold austerity is practised, by men of steadfast devotion, with great faith, without desiring fruits, it is said to be Sāttwica.

18. When this austerity is performed with the object of gaining welcome, honor and worship, or from ostentation, it is said to be Rājasica, unstable and fleeting.

19. The austerity which is performed with deluded understanding, by

[1] Brāhmanas.
[2] Spiritual teachers.

self-torture or for the purpose of injuring another, that is said to be Tāmasica.

20. "To give is right": with this thought, giving to one who does nothing in return, in a fit place, time and to a worthy person, is regarded as a Sāttwica gift.

21. That gift which is made with the thought of receiving in return or of looking for the fruits, or given reluctantly, is known as a Rājasica gift.

22. The gift which is made in the wrong place or time, to unworthy persons, with disrespect and contempt, that is said to be a Tāmasica gift.

23. "Om, Tat, Sat" (Yes, That, the Real), this is declared to be the triple name of Brahman, by which were made of old the Brāhmanas, the Vedas and sacrifices.

24. Therefore the followers of the Vedas always begin their acts of sacrifice, gift and austerity by uttering "Om" as enjoined in the Scriptures.

25. By uttering "Tat," without looking for fruits, the seekers after liberation perform various acts of sacrifice, austerity and gift.

26. O Pārtha, the word "Sat" is used in the sense of reality and of goodness; and the word "Sat" is also used in the sense of auspicious act.

27. Steadfastness in sacrifice, austerity and gift is called "Sat," and action performed for the sake of That (Supreme) is also called "Sat."

28. O Pārtha, whatever is sacrificed, or given, or performed, or whatever austerities are practised without faith, that is called "Asat" (Unreal). It is neither good for here nor for hereafter.

Here ends the Seventeenth Chapter called
"Division of the Threefold Faith"

CHAPTER XVIII

Arjuna said:

1. O Lord of the senses, O Mighty-armed, O Destroyer of Keshi, I desire to know respectively the truth regarding Sannyāsa (renunciation) as well as of Tyāga (relinquishment).

The Blessed Lord said:

2. The Sages declare that the renunciation of actions with desire (for fruits) is Sannyāsa, and the learned declare that the relinquishment of the fruits of all actions is Tyāga.

3. Some philosophers declare that all actions should be given up as an evil; while others say that the work of sacrifice, gift and austerity should never be given up.

4. O best of the Bharatas, O tiger among men, hear from Me the final truth regarding relinquishment; for relinquishment has been declared to be of three kinds.

5. The acts of sacrifice, gift and austerity are not to be relinquished, but should indeed be performed; for sacrifice, gift and austerity are purifying to the discriminative.

6. But, O Pārtha, even these acts are to be performed, giving up attachment and the fruits. This is My best and sure conviction.

7. Relinquishment of the prescribed actions is not proper. Abandonment of the same, through delusion, is declared to be Tāmasica.

8. He who relinquishes action out of fear of bodily trouble, thinking "it is painful," thus performing Rājasica relinquishment, does not obtain the fruit thereof.

9. O Arjuna, giving up attachment and fruit, when prescribed action is performed because it should be done, such relinquishment is regarded as Sāttwica.

10. The relinquisher, imbued with Sattwa and steady understanding, with his doubts destroyed, does not hate a disagreeable work, nor is he attached to an agreeable one.

11. It is not possible for the embodied to relinquish actions entirely; but he who relinquishes the fruits of action is called a (true) relinquisher.

12. Good, evil and mixed, threefold is the fruit of action obtained by non-relinquishers after death; but never by relinquishers.

13. O mighty-armed, learn from Me the five causes for the accomplishment of all action, as it is declared in the Sānkhya philosophy.

14. The body, the agent, the various senses, the different and manifold functions and the presiding deity as the fifth.

15. Whatever action man performs with his body, speech and mind, whether right or the reverse, these five are its causes.

16. This being the case, he who, through impure understanding, looks upon his Self, the One, as the agent, he of perverted mind, sees not (the Truth).

17. He who has no egotistical notion (such as "I am the doer"), whose understanding is not affected (by good and evil), even though slaying these people, he neither slays nor is bound (by action).

18. The knowledge, the knowable, and the knower are the threefold cause of action; the instrument (senses), the object and the agent, are the threefold basis of action.

19. Knowledge, action and agent are declared in the Sānkhya philosophy to be threefold, according to the distinction of the Gunas. Hear them also duly.

20. Know that knowledge to be Sāttwica, by which is seen in all beings the One Immutable, inseparate in the separate.

21. But the knowledge which sees in all beings the distinct entities of diverse kinds as different from one another, know that knowledge to be Rājasica (passionate).

22. While that knowledge which is confined to one single effect, as if it were the whole, without reason, not founded on truth, and trivial, that is declared to be Tāmasica.

23. The action which is ordained, performed by one not desirous of fruits, free from attachment and without love or aversion, is declared to be Sāttwica.

24. But the action which is performed with longing for objects of desire, or with egoism, or with much effort, is declared to be Rājasica.

25. The action which is undertaken from delusion, without heed to ability and consequence, loss and injury (to others) is said to be Tāmasica.

26. Free from attachment, non-egotistic, endued with perseverance and enthusiasm, unaffected in success or failure, such an agent is called Sāttwica.

27. He who is passionate and desirous of the fruits of action, greedy, malignant, impure, easily moved by joy or sorrow, such an agent is called Rājasica.

28. Unsteady, vulgar, arrogant, dishonest, malicious, indolent, despondent, procrastinating, such an agent is called Tāmasica.

29. O Dhananjaya, hear thou the distinction of understanding and fortitude according to the threefold Gunas, as I declare them exhaustively and distinctively.

30. O Pārtha, know that understanding to be Sāttwica which knows when to act and when to abstain from action; also right and wrong action, fear and fearlessness, bondage and liberation.

31. O Pārtha, that by which the understanding is distorted regarding right and wrong, proper and improper action, that is called Rājasica understanding.

32. That understanding which is covered with darkness and regards unrighteousness as righteousness, and looks upon all things in a perverted light, that, O Pārtha, is Tāmasica understanding.

33. That firmness, O Pārtha, by which one can control the activity of the mind, Prāna and senses, through the unwavering practice of Yoga, that firmness is Sāttwica.

34. But that firmness by which one clings to duty, desire and wealth, being attached therein and desirous of fruits, that firmness is Rājasica.

35. O Pārtha, that by which a stupid man does not give up sleep, fear, grief, despondency and vanity, that firmness is Tāmasica.

36. O Prince of the Bharata race, now hear from Me regarding the threefold happiness, that happiness which one enjoys by habit and by which one comes to the end of pain.

37. That which is like poison in the beginning and like nectar in the end, that happiness is said to be Sāttwica (pure), born of the blissful knowledge of the Self.

38. That happiness which arises from the contract of the senses with sense-objects and is like nectar in the beginning but like poison in the end, is declared to be Rājasica.

39. That happiness which begins and ends in self-delusion, arising from sleep, indolence and false perception, is declared to be Tāmasica.

40. There is no being on earth or in heaven among the gods, who is free from these three Gunas, born of Prakriti (Nature).

41. O Parantapa (Arjuna), the duties of Brāhmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and also of Sudras, are distributed according to their Gunas, born of their nature.

42. Control of mind and senses, austerity, purity, forgiveness and also simplicity, knowledge, realization and faith in God, these are the duties of Brāhmanas, born of their nature.

43. Bravery, energy, firmness, skill and also not flying from the battle, generosity, lordliness, are the duties of Kshatriyas, born of their nature.

44. Agriculture, rearing of cattle and trade are the duties of the Vaisyas, born of their nature. Service is the duty of Sudras, born of their nature.

45. Man attains perfection, being engaged in his own duty. Hear now how one engaged in his own duty attains perfection.

46. Him from Whom is the evolution of all beings, by Whom all this is pervaded, by worshipping Him with his own duty man attains perfection.

47. Better is one's own duty, although imperfect, than that of another

well performed. He who does the duty born of his own nature incurs no sin.

48. O son of Kunti, one should not relinquish the duty to which he is born, though it is defective, for all undertakings are surrounded by evil as fire by smoke.

49. He, whose understanding is unattached everywhere, who is self-subjugated, devoid of desires, he, by renunciation, attains the supreme perfection, consisting in freedom from action.

50. O son of Kunti, after reaching such perfection, how he attains to Brahman, the highest Goal of Wisdom, do thou hear that from Me in brief.

51. Endued with pure understanding; subduing self by firmness; relinquishing sound and other sense-objects; abandoning longing and aversion;

52. Resorting to a secluded spot; eating little; controlling body, speech and mind; ever steadfastly engaged in meditation and concentration; endued with dispassion;

53. Forsaking egoism, power, pride, lust, anger and possession; freed from the notion of "mine" and tranquil: one is thus fit to become one with Brahman.

54. Becoming one with Brahman, serene-minded, he neither grieves nor desires; alike to all beings, he attains supreme devotion unto Me.

55. By devotion he knows Me in truth, what and who I am; having thus known Me in truth, he forthwith enters into Me.

56. Even though constantly performing all actions, taking refuge in Me, through My grace he attains to the Eternal, Immutable Abode.

57. Surrendering mentally all actions to Me, regarding Me as the highest goal, resorting to Self-knowledge, do thou ever fix thy heart on Me.

58. Fixing thy heart on Me, thou shalt, by My grace, overcome all obstacles; but if, through egoism, thou wilt not hear Me, thou shalt perish.

59. If, actuated by egoism, thou thinkest: "I will not fight," in vain is this thy resolve. Thine own nature will impel thee.

60. O son of Kunti, being bound by thine own Karma, born of thine own nature, thou shalt be helplessly led to do that which from delusion thou desirest not to do.

61. O Arjuna, the Lord dwells in the heart of all beings, causing all beings to revolve, as if mounted on a wheel.

62. O Bhārata, take refuge in Him with all thy heart; through His grace thou shalt attain Supreme Peace and the Eternal Abode.

63. Thus wisdom, most profound of all secrets, has been declared unto thee by Me; pondering over it fully, do as thou likest.

64. Hear again My Supreme Word, most profound of all; for thou art My dearly beloved, therefore I shall speak for thy good.

65. Fill thy heart with Me, be thou devoted to Me, do thou worship Me and bow down to Me. Thus thou shalt attain unto Me. Truly I promise thee, for thou art dear to Me.

66. Giving up all Dharmas (righteous and unrighteous actions), come unto Me alone for refuge. I shall free thee from all sins; grieve not.

67. This should never be spoken by thee to one who is devoid of austerity or without devotion, nor to one who does not render service, nor to one who speaks ill of Me.

68. He who, with supreme devotion to Me, will declare this deeply profound secret to My devotees, doubtless he shall come unto Me.

69. There is none among men who does dearer service to Me than he, nor shall there be any other on earth dearer to Me than he.

70. And he who shall study this Sacred Dialogue between us, by him I shall be worshipped with sacrifice of wisdom. Such is My conviction.

71. And even that man who shall hear this, full of faith and without malice, he too, being freed from evil, shall attain to the sacred region of those of righteous deeds.

72. O son of Prithā, has this been heard by thee with an attentive mind? O Dhananjaya, has the delusion of thine ignorance been destroyed?

Arjuna said:

73. My delusion is destroyed and I have regained my memory through Thy grace, O Changeless One. I stand firm with doubts dispelled; I will do Thy Word.

Sanjaya said:

74. Thus have I heard this wonderful Dialogue between Vāsudeva (Krishna) and great-souled Pārtha, causing my hair to stand on end.

75. Through the grace of Vyāsa have I heard this supreme and most profound Yoga, declared directly by Krishna Himself, the Lord of Yoga.

76. O King, as I remember, over and over, this wonderful and holy Dialogue between Keshava and Arjuna, I rejoice again and again.

77. And as I remember, over and over, that most wonderful Form of Hari (the Lord), great is my wonder, O King, and I rejoice again and again.

78. Wherever is Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, wherever is Pārtha, the bowman, there are prosperity, victory, glory, sound polity. Such is my firm conviction.

Here ends the Eighteenth Chapter called "The Path of Liberation through Renunciation" in the Srimad-Bhagavad-Gîta, the Essence of the Upanishads, the Science of Brahman, the Scripture of Yoga, the Dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna

Peace! Peace! Peace be unto all.

The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali

INTRODUCTION

THE MOST CURIOUS, most distinctive and at the same time probably the most widely known aspect of Hindu mysticism is the philosophy and practice of *yoga*. If the sum of Brahmanism may be defined as teaching the mystic union of man's true self with the world-soul (*brahman*, God, etc.), *yoga* represents the most direct and well-formulated method for achieving that goal, and as such constitutes a form of religious experience and a religious technique. The reason for the popularity of *yoga* philosophy and its particular appeal to the modern world is twofold; it arises from the combination of a system of physical regimen that has something to do with physical and mental health with a mystic search for inner stability and the psychic depths of man's soul, which seems to underly a broad and deep undercurrent of modern life. "To me," says C. G. Jung, "the crux of the spiritual problem of today is to be found in the fascination which psychic life exerts upon the modern man." It is needless to point out that it is modern psychoanalysis itself, which has awakened our interest in, and opened our way to the exploration of, the subconscious, and by changing our whole conception of the human "mind," has exhibited to us the tyrannous demoniac power of our primordial instincts, impulses and "urges" which govern our lives in that vast psychological underworld. Lastly, it must be pointed out that popularity of *yoga* is due to its claims of supernatural powers and to the general interest in the hocus-pocus of all forms of occultism.

Yoga (meaning "yoke") represents a form of personal discipline, with the object of "yoking" the body to the soul, and the individual soul to the universal soul. From a practical aspect, its aim is to help cultivate emotional stability. It begins with a unique and unparalleled exploration in the region of the involuntary muscles and bringing them under the control of the mind, and proceeds to the liberation of the mind from its sense impressions and the deeper residuents and impedimenta that not only clog but form the very fabric of our subconscious life which Freud has summed up as *Eros,* or the life-principle, comprising the sex instinct and the ego-instinct. Finally, it aims at the destruction of the "mind" for the liberation of the "soul" (which is variously interpreted), at which point it has a religious character and goes beyond the fields and aims of psychoanalytic research.

Before the coming of Freud and Jung, we might have easily laughed off *yoga* philosophy and put it on the same level with the much debated Hindu rope trick and levitation. *Yoga* does claim powers of levitation. In the first week of July, 1942, I read in the *New York Herald Tribune* a factual account by a responsible Hindu professor of a *yogi* buried under publicly tested conditions and coming to life again after six months in the presence of thousands of Hindu peasants. It is these sensational reports that appeal to the popular fancy. After the modern experiments of freezing of patients under ice, these feats seem less incredible and are not any more inexplicable than the hibernation of animals. Still, they are bound to detract our attention from the more normal and earnest problems of achieving emotional stability and psychological health.

Luckily, modern psychology offers the key to our understanding of *yoga.* Breathing exercises and the mastery of ordinarily involuntary muscles by practice require no explanation; the deeper problems of the psyche do. Jung has written a full and highly illuminating introduction to a Chinese *yoga* book (*The Secret of the Golden Flower,* Harcourt, Brace, 1938, not to be confused with the Buddhistic *Lotus Gospel;* see especially the sections, "Difficulties encountered by a European in trying to understand the East," and "Modern psychology offers a possibility of understanding"). Kovoor T. Behanan, in his *"Yoga: a Scientific Evaluation"* (Macmillan, 1937) has also drawn interesting parallels in the chapter, "Yoga and Psychoanalysis." The curious thing about this book is that in Behanan, a Hindu by birth, his scientific training in Toronto and Yale seems to have got the upper hand of his native Hindu blood and his early training at Calcutta; I rather think his approach to *yoga* is more

"university trained" and therefore more trivial than that of a continental mind like Jung.

Readers of the *yoga* section of the *Bhagavad-Gita* must have been impressed by its concern with what lies in the subconscious life. The overwhelming emphasis on the subconscious and the dependence of the *yoga* disciple upon the *guru,* or spiritual teacher, are points of similarity with the practice of psychoanalysis. "*Yoga* can only be safely learned by direct contact with a teacher," warns Swami Vivekananda. When we come to the analysis of the mind itself, only modern psychology makes the doctrine intelligible to us. The process of destruction of the mind (*chitta*) in order to save the soul (*purusha*) can be understood only in psychological terms. The mind with its incrusted layers of sense-attachments, which *yoga* teaches as the hindrances to our seeing of the ultimate soul, is no more than the sepulchre of primordial life-urges that psychology has shown us; the doctrine of the rebirth is no more than that survival in individual of a superpersonal or collective race inheritance phylogenetically acquired; the impersonal, collective nature of these primordial forces is apparently the same as that of the "collective unconscious" of Jung. Finally, the urge for release and liberation is what Freud has negatively called the "death-instinct," the opposite of the "life-instinct," very inadequately illustrated, I am afraid, in sadism and masochism. Freud says very correctly, in the subconscious, "instinctive impulses . . . exist independently side by side, and are exempt from mental contradiction. . . . There is in this system no negation, no dubiety, no varying degrees of certainty. . . . Its processes are timeless, they are not ordered temporarily, are not altered by the passage of time, in fact bear no relation to time at all." It is these forces, as well as the body that must be brought under control by *yoga* practice.

It is also important to point out that the theories of psychoanalysis, like the theories of *yoga,* are speculative, and only a portion of these subjective interpretations are amenable to proof by experimentation. We have not even the vocabulary for these inner phenomena, and when psychoanalysis begins to tackle the depths of the psyche, it is compelled to invent terms that are in their nature quasi-scientific make-shifts—terms like *life-urge,* the *Id, animus, anima, libido* (a form of discharge of energy which unfortunately cannot be measured in volts), and that elusive spiritual entity called *Eros.* Hindu psychology, Buddhist and non-Buddhist, abounds in such terms. It is said that there is a greater psychological vocabulary in Sanskrit and Pali than in the "modern lan-

guages" combined. (For example, see the "Table of the Eighty-Nine Consciousnesses" in Henry Clarke Warren's *Buddhism in Translations.*)

Jung says, "We have not yet clearly grasped the fact that Western Theosophy is an amateurish imitation of the East. We are just taking up astrology again, and that to the Oriental is his daily bread. Our studies of sexual life, originating in Vienna and England, are matched or surpassed by Hindu teachings on the subject. Oriental texts ten centuries old introduce us to philosophical relativism,[1] while the idea of indetermination, newly broached in the West, furnishes the very basis of Chinese science.[2] Richard Wilhelm has even shown me that certain complicated processes discovered by analytical psychology are recognizably described in ancient Chinese texts.[3] Psycholanalysis itself and the lines of thought to which it gives rise—surely a distinctly Western development—are only a beginner's attempt compared to what is an immemorial art in the East."[4]

I can do no better than quote Swami Vivekananda on the nature and character of the *yoga* discipline. "For thousands of years such phenomena have been studied, investigated, and generalised, the whole ground of the religious faculties of man has been analysed, and the practical result is the science of *Rāja-Yoga*. . . . It declares that each man is only a conduit for the infinite ocean of knowledge and power that lies beyond mankind. It teaches that desires and wants are in man, that the power of supply is also in man; and that wherever and whenever a desire, a want, a prayer has been fulfilled, it was out of this infinite magazine that the supply came, and not from any supernatural being. The idea of supernatural beings may arouse to a certain extent the power of action in man, but it also brings spiritual decay. It brings dependence; it brings fear; it brings superstition. It degenerates into a horrible belief in the natural weakness of man. There is no supernatural, says the *Yogi,* but there are in nature gross manifestations and subtle manifestations. The subtle are the causes, the gross the effects. The gross can be easily perceived by the senses; not so the subtle. The practice of *Rāja-Yoga* will lead to the acquisition of the more subtle perceptions."

The *Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali* is the classic and textbook of *yoga,* acknowledged by all schools to be the highest authority on the subject.

[1] Relativism is really as old as Taoism in China.
[2] Jung is referring to *Yi-ching,* one of the Chinese *Five Classics.*
[3] For instance, the case of narcissism in Miss Feng Hsiao-ch'ing.
[4] C. G. Jung: *Modern Man in Search of a Soul,* p. 249.

It was written, according to Professor J. H. Woods, in the fourth or fifth centuries of our era. In this complete text, without the commentaries, a brief glimpse may be had of the contents of *yoga* teachings. I have used the free and easily understandable translation of Swami Vivekananda, and those who are interested should read his commentaries (*Rāja-Yoga,* Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York, 1939). The classic Comment, and Explanations of the Comment, together with Professor James Haughton Woods' scholarly translation of the text *Yoga-System of Patanjali,* Harvard Oriental Series, Vol. 17, may be consulted only by the academically-minded. Professor Woods seems to err on the scholarly side: his "sources-of-valid-ideas" are translated by Vivekananda as "right knowledge," his "predicate-relation" (*vikalpa*) is simply the latter's "verbal delusion," and "Memory is not-adding-surreptitiously to a once experienced object" simply means, according to the Hindu *yoga* teacher, "Memory is when perceived objects do not slip away." In the same way, I believe "non-attachment" is better English than "passionlessness" and "egoism" better than "feeling-of-personality." "Undifferentiated-consciousness" may be etymologically more exact than "ignorance" for the rendering of *avidyā,* but the important thing is what a Hindu word means to a Hindu, for etymological meaning is always altered by a current meaning which usage has acquired. A brief, but clear exposition of the *yoga* mysticism may be found in *Hindu Mysticism,* by S. N. Dasgupta (Open Court), a lucid introduction to Hindu thought, in general, as against the same author's heavy and scholarly *History of Indian Philosophy*. I have supplied the sectional headings for the convenience of the reader.

The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali

Translated by Swami Vivekananda

CHAPTER I: CONCENTRATION: ITS SPIRITUAL USES

Goal of Concentration

1. Now concentration is explained.
2. Yoga is restraining the mind-stuff *(Chitta)* from taking various forms *(Vrittis)*.
3. At that time (the time of concentration) the seer *(Purusha)* rests in his own (unmodified) state.

Forms of Mind-Stuff

4. At other times (other than that of concentration) the seer is identified with the modifications.
5. There are five classes of modifications, (some) painful and (others) not painful.
6. (These are) right knowledge, indiscrimination, verbal delusion, sleep and memory.
7. Direct perception, inference, and competent evidence, are proofs.
8. Indiscrimination is false knowledge not established in real nature.
9. Verbal delusion follows from words having no (corresponding) reality.
10. Sleep is a *Vritti* which embraces the feeling of voidness.

11. Memory is when (*Vrittis* of) perceived subjects do not slip away (and through impressions come back to consciousness).

Methods of Control

12. Their control is by practice and non-attachment.

13. Continuous struggle to keep them (the *Vrittis*) perfectly restrained is practice.

14. It becomes firmly grounded by long constant efforts with great love (for the end to be attained).

15. That effect which comes to those who have given up their thirst after objects either seen or heard, and which wills to control the objects, is non-attachment.

16. That is extreme non-attachment which gives up even the qualities, and comes from the knowledge of (the real nature of) the *Purusha*.[1]

Kinds of Concentration

17. The concentration called right knowledge is that which is followed by reasoning, discrimination, bliss, unqualified egoism.

18. There is another *Samādhi*[2] which is attained by the constant practice of cessation of all mental activity, in which the *Chitta* retains only the unmanifested impressions.

Different Ways of Attaining Samādhi

19. (This *Samādhi* when not followed by extreme non-attachment) becomes the cause of the re-manifestation of the gods and of those that become merged in nature.

[1] *Note by Vivekananda.* "We have first to understand what the *Purusha,* the Self, is, and what are the qualities. According to *Yoga* philosophy the whole of nature consists of three qualities or forces; one is called *Tamas,* another *Rajas* and the third *Sattva.* These three qualities manifest themselves in the physical world as darkness or inactivity; attraction or repulsion; and equilibrium of the two. Everything that is in nature, all manifestations, are combinations and recombinations of these three forces. Nature has been divided into various categories by the *Sānkhyas;* the Self of man is beyond all these, beyond nature. It is effulgent, pure and perfect. Whatever of intelligence we see in nature is but the reflection of this Self upon nature."

[2] Superconscious state, trance.

20. To others (this *Samādhi*) comes through faith, energy, memory, concentration, and discrimination of the real.

21. Success is speedy for the extremely energetic.

22. The success of *Yogis* differs according as the means they adopt are mild, medium or intense.

23. Or by devotion to *Isvara.*

The "Om"

24. *Isvara* (the Supreme Ruler) is a special *Purusha,* untouched by misery, actions, their results and desires.

25. In Him becomes infinite that all-knowingness which in others is (only) a germ.

26. He is the Teacher of even the ancient teachers, being not limited by time.

27. His manifesting word is *Om.*

28. The repetition of this (*Om*) and meditating on its meaning (is the way).

29. From that is gained (the knowledge of) introspection, and the destruction of obstacles.

Forms of Meditation and Samādhi

30. Disease, mental laziness, doubt, lack of enthusiasm, lethargy, clinging to sense-enjoyments, false perception, non-attaining concentration, and falling away from the state when obtained, are the obstructing distractions.

31. Grief, mental distress, tremor of the body, irregular breathing, accompany non-retention of concentration.

32. To remedy this, the practice of one subject (should be made).

33. Friendship, mercy, gladness and indifference, being thought of in regard to subjects, happy, unhappy, good and evil respectively, pacify the *Chitta.*

34. By throwing out and restraining the Breath.

35. Those forms of concentration that bring extraordinary sense perceptions cause perseverance of the mind.

36. Or (by the meditation on) the Effulgent Light, which is beyond all sorrow.

37. Or (by meditation on) the heart that has given up all attachment to sense-objects.

38. Or by meditating on the knowledge that comes in sleep.

39. Or by the meditation on anything that appeals to one as good.

40. The *Yogi's* mind thus meditating, becomes unobstructed from the atomic to the infinite.

41. The *Yogi* whose *Vrittis* have thus become powerless (controlled) obtains in the receiver, (the instrument of) receiving, and the received (the Self, the mind, and external objects), concentratedness and sameness, like the crystal (before different coloured objects).

42. Sound, meaning, and resulting knowledge, being mixed up, is (called) *Samādhi* with-question.

43. *Samādhi* called 'without-question' (comes) when the memory is purified, or devoid of qualities, expressing only the meaning (of the meditated object).

44. By this process (the concentrations) with discrimination and without discrimination, whose objects are finer, are (also) explained.

45. The finer objects end with the *Pradhāna.*

46. These concentrations are with seed.

47. The concentration "without discrimination" being purified, the *Chitta* becomes firmly fixed.

48. The knowledge in that is called "filled with Truth."

49. The knowledge that is gained from testimony and inference is about common objects. That from the *Samādhi* just mentioned is of a much higher order, being able to penetrate where inference and testimony cannot go.

50. The resulting impression from this *Samādhi* obstructs all other impressions.

51. By the restraint of even this (impression, which obstructs all other impressions), all being restrained, comes the "seedless" *Samādhi.*

CHAPTER II: CONCENTRATION: ITS PRACTICE

The Pain-Bearing Obstructions

1. Mortification, study, and surrendering fruits of work to God are called *Kriyā-yoga.*

2. (It is for) the practice of *Samādhi* and minimising the pain-bearing obstructions.

3. The pain-bearing obstructions are—ignorance, egoism, attachment, aversion, and clinging to life.

4. Ignorance is the productive field of all these that follow, whether they are dormant, attenuated, overpowered, or expanded.

5. Ignorance is taking the non-eternal, the impure, the painful, and the non-Self, as the eternal, the pure, the happy, and the Atman or Self (respectively).

6. Egoism is the identification of the seer with the instrument of seeing.

7. Attachment is that which dwells on pleasure.

8. Aversion is that which dwells on pain.

9. Flowing through its own nature, and established even in the learned, is the clinging to life.

10. The fine *Samskāras*[1] are to be conquered by resolving them into their causal state.

11. By meditation, their (gross) modifications are to be rejected.

12. The 'receptacle of works'[2] has its root in these pain-bearing obstructions, and their experience is in this visible life, or in the unseen life.

13. The root being there, the fruition comes (in the form of) species, life, and experience of pleasure and pain.

14. They bear fruit as pleasure or pain, caused by virtue or vice.

15. To the discriminating, all is, as it were, painful on account of everything bringing pain, either as consequence, or as anticipation of loss of happiness or as fresh craving arising from impressions of happiness, and also as counter-action of qualities.

16. The misery which is not yet come is to be avoided.

The Independence of the Soul as Seer

17. The cause of that which is to be avoided is the junction of the seer and the seen.

18. The experienced is composed of elements and organs, is of the nature of illumination, action, and inertia, and is for the purpose of experience and release (of the experiencer).

19. The states of the qualities are the defined, the undefined, the indicated only, and the signless.

[1] *Samskāras* are the subtle impressions that manifest themselves into gross forms later on—original note.

[2] By the 'receptacle of works' is meant the sum total of *Samskāras*—original note.

20. The seer is intelligence only, and though pure, sees through the colouring of the intellect.

21. The nature of the experienced is for him.

22. Though destroyed for him whose goal has been gained, yet it is not destroyed, being common to others.

23. Junction is the cause of the realisation of the nature of both the powers, the experienced and its Lord.

24. Ignorance is its cause.

25. There being absence of that (ignorance) there is absence of junction, which is the thing-to-be-avoided; that is the independence of the seer.

26. The means of destruction of ignorance is unbroken practice of discrimination.

27. His knowledge is of the sevenfold highest ground.

The Eight Stages

28. By the practice of the different parts of *Yoga* the impurities being destroyed, knowledge becomes effulgent up to discrimination.

29. *Yama, Niyama, Asana, Prānāyāma, Pratyāhāra, Dhāranā, Dhyāna,* and *Samādhi,* are the eight limbs of *Yoga.*

1. FIVE VOWS (*Yama*)

30. Non-killing, truthfulness, non-stealing, continence, and non-receiving, are called *Yama.*

31. These, unbroken by time, place, purpose and caste-rules, are (universal) great vows.

2. FIVE OBSERVANCES (*Niyama*)

32. Internal and external purification, contentment, mortification, study, and worship of God, are the *Niyamas.*

33. To obstruct thoughts which are inimical to *Yoga,* contrary thoughts should be brought.

34. The obstructions to *Yoga* are killing, falsehood, etc., whether committed, caused, or approved; either through avarice, or anger or ignorance; whether slight, middling, or great; and result in infinite ignorance and misery. This is (the method of) thinking the contrary.

35. Non-killing being established, in his presence all enmities cease (in others).

36. By the establishment of truthfulness the *Yogi* gets the power of attaining for himself and others the fruits of work without the works.

37. By the establishment of non-stealing all wealth comes to the *Yogi*.

38. By the establishment of continence energy is gained.

39. When he is fixed in non-receiving he gets the memory of past life.

40. Internal and external cleanliness being established, arises disgust for one's own body, and non-intercourse with others.

41. There also arises purification of the *Sattva*,[1] cheerfulness of the mind, concentration, conquest of the organs, and fitness for the realisation of the Self.

42. From contentment comes superlative happiness.

43. The result of mortification is bringing powers to the organs and the body, by destroying the impurity.

44. By repetition of the *Mantra*[2] comes the realisation of the intended deity.

45. By sacrificing all to *Iswara*[3] comes *Samādhi*.

3. POSTURE: (*Asana*)

46. Posture is that which is firm and pleasant.

47. By lessening the natural tendency (for restlessness) and meditating on the unlimited (posture becomes firm and pleasant).

48. Seat being conquered, the dualities do not obstruct.

4. RESPIRATION (*Prānāyāma*)

49. Controlling the motion of the exhalation and the inhalation follows after this.

50. Its modifications are either external or internal, or motionless, regulated by place, time, and number, either long or short.

51. The fourth is restraining the *Prāna* by reflecting on external or internal objects.

52. From that, the covering to the light of the *Chitta* is attenuated.

53. The mind becomes fit for *Dhāranā*.

5. WITHDRAWING OF THE ORGANS (*Pratyāhāra*)

54. The drawing in of the organs is by their giving up their own objects and taking the form of the mind-stuff, as it were.

55. Thence arises supreme control of the organs.

[1] The good element; see note to I, 16.
[2] Prayer formula.
[3] The Lord (also *Ivara*).

CHAPTER III: POWERS

We have now come to the chapter in which the *Yoga* powers are described.

6. CONCENTRATION ON ONE OBJECT (*Dhāranā*)

1. *Dhāranā* is holding the mind on to some particular object.

7. MEDITATION (*Dhyāna*)

2. An unbroken flow of knowledge in that object is *Dhyāna.*

8. SUPERCONSCIOUSNESS (*Samādhi*)

3. When that, giving up all forms, reflects only the meaning, it is *Samādhi.*

Description of the Last Three Stages

4. (These) three (when practised) in regard to one object is *Samyama.*
5. By the conquest of that comes light of knowledge.
6. That should be employed in stages.
7. These three are more internal than those that precede.
8. But even they are external to the seedless *(Samādhi).*
9. By the suppression of the disturbed impressions of the mind, and by the rise of impressions of control, the mind, which persists in that moment of control, is said to attain the controlling modifications.
10. Its flow becomes steady by habit.
11. Taking in all sorts of objects, and concentrating upon one object, these two powers being destroyed and manifested respectively, the *Chitta* gets the modification called *Samādhi.*
12. The one-pointedness of the *Chitta* is when the impression that is past and that which is present are similar.
13. By this is explained the threefold transformation of form, time and state, in fine or gross matter, and in the organs.
14. That which is acted upon by transformations, either past, present or yet to be manifested, is the qualified.
15. The succession of changes is the cause of manifold evolution.

The Transformation of Mental Powers

16. By making *Samyama* on the three sorts of changes comes the knowledge of past and future.

17. By making *Samyama* on word, meaning, and knowledge, which are ordinarily confused, comes the knowledge of all animal sounds.

18. By perceiving the impressions, (comes) the knowledge of past life.

19. By making *Samyama* on the signs in another's body, knowledge of his mind comes.

20. But not its contents, that not being the object of the *Samyama.*

21. By making *Samyama* on the form of the body, the perceptibility of the form being obstructed, and the power of manifestation in the eye being separated, the *Yogi's* body becomes unseen.

22. By this the disappearance or concealment of words which are being spoken and such other things, are also explained.

23. *Karma* is of two kinds, soon to be fructified, and late to be fructified. By making *Samyama* on these, or by the signs called *Arishta,* portents, the *Yogis* know the exact time of separation from their bodies.

24. By making *Samyama* on friendship, mercy, etc. (I:33), the *Yogi* excels in respective qualities.

25. By making *Samyama* on the strength of the elephant, and others, their respective strength comes to the *Yogi.*

26. By making *Samyama* on the effulgent light (I:36) comes the knowledge of the fine, the obstructed and the remote.

27. By making *Samyama* on the sun, (comes) the knowledge of the world.

28. On the moon, (comes) the knowledge of the cluster of stars.

29. On the pole-star, (comes) the knowledge of the motion of the stars.

30. On the navel circle, (comes) the knowledge of the constitution of the body.

31. On the hollow of the throat, (comes) cessation of hunger.

32. On the nerve called *Kurma* (comes) fixity of the body.

33. On the light emanating from the top of the head, sight of the *Siddhas.*[1]

34. Or by the power of *Prātibha*[2] all knowledge.

35. In the heart, knowledge of minds.

[1] The *Siddhas* are beings who are a little above ghosts. When the *Yogi* concentrates his mind on the top of his head he will see these *Siddhas*—original note.

[2] Spontaneous enlightenment from purity.

36. Enjoyment comes by the non-discrimination of the Soul and *Sattva* which are totally different. The latter whose actions are for another is separate from the self-centred one. *Samyama* on the self-centred one gives knowledge of the *Purusha*.

37. From that arises the knowledge belonging to *Prātibha* and (supernatural) hearing, touching, seeing, tasting, and smelling.

38. These are obstacles to *Samādhi:* but they are powers in the worldly state.

Supernatural Powers

39. When the cause of bondage of the *Chitta* has become loosened, the *Yogi,* by his knowledge of its channels of activity (the nerves), enters another's body.

40. By conquering the current called *Udāna*[1] the Yogi does not sink in water, or in swamps, he can walk on thorns, etc., and can die at will.

41. By the conquest of the current *Samāna* he is surrounded by a blaze of light.

42. By making *Samyama* on the relation between the ear and the *Ākāsa*[2] comes divine hearing.

43. By making *Samyama* on the relation between the *Ākāsa* and the body and becoming light as cotton wool, etc., through meditation on them, the *Yogi* goes through the skies.

44. By making *Samyama* on the 'real modifications' of the mind, outside of the body, called great disembodiedness, comes disappearance of the covering to light.

45. By making *Samyama* on the gross and fine forms of the elements, their essential traits, the inherence of the *Gunas*[3] in them and on their contributing to the experience of the soul, comes mastery of the elements.

46. From that comes minuteness, and the rest of the powers, 'glorification of the body,' and indestructibleness of the bodily qualities.

47. The 'glorification of the body' is beauty, complexion, strength, adamantine hardness.

48. By making *Samyama* on the objectivity and power of illumination of the organs, on egoism, the inherence of the *Gunas* in them and on their contributing to the experience of the soul, comes the conquest of the organs.

[1] The name of the nerve current that governs the lungs, and all the upper parts of the body.
[2] The ether.
[3] The three elements.

49. From that comes to the body the power of rapid movement like the mind, power of the organs independently of the body, and conquest of nature.

50. By making *Samyama* on the discrimination between *Sattva* and the *Purusha* come omnipotence and omniscience.

Isolation or Complete Freedom

51. By giving up even these powers comes the destruction of the very seed of evil, which leads to *Kaivalya*.[2]

52. The *Yogi* should not feel allured or flattered by the overtures of celestial beings, for fear of evil again.

53. By making *Samyama* on a particle of time and its precession and succession comes discrimination.

54. Those things which cannot be differentiated by species, sign and place, even they will be discriminated by the above *Samyama*.

55. The saving knowledge is that knowledge of discrimination which simultaneously covers all objects, in all their variations.

56. By the similarity of purity between the *Sattva* and the *Purusha* comes *Kaivalya*.

CHAPTER IV: INDEPENDENCE

Desires and Objects of the Mind

1. The *Siddhis* (powers) are attained by birth, chemical means, power of words, mortification or concentration.

2. The change into another species is by the filling in of nature.

3. Good and bad deeds are not the direct causes in the transformations of nature, but they act as breakers of obstacles to the evolutions of nature: as a farmer breaks the obstacles to the course of water, which then runs down by its own nature.

4. From egoism alone proceed the created minds.

5. Though the activities of the different created minds are various, the one original mind is the controller of them all.

6. Among the various *Chittas* that which is attained by *Samādhi* is desireless.

[2] Complete isolation or independence.

7. Works are neither black nor white for the *Yogis;* for others they are three-fold—black, white, and mixed.

8. From these threefold works are manifested in each state only those desires (which are) fitting to that state alone. (The others are held in abeyance for the time being.)

9. There is consecutiveness in desires, even though separated by species, space and time, there being identification of memory and impressions.

10. Thirst for happiness being eternal desires are without beginning.

11. Being held together by cause, effect, support, and objects, in the absence of these is its absence.

12. The past and future exist in their own nature, qualities having different ways.

13. They are manifested or fine, being of the nature of the *Gunas.*[1]

14. The unity in things is from the unity in changes.

15. Since perception and desire vary with regard to the same object, mind and object are of different nature.

16. Things are known or unknown to the mind, being dependent on the colouring which they give to the mind.

17. The states of the mind are always known because the lord of the mind, the *Purusha,* is unchangeable.

18. The mind is not self-luminous, being an object.

19. From its being unable to cognise both at the same time.

20. Another cognising mind being assumed there will be no end to such assumptions and confusion of memory will be the result.

21. The essence of knowledge (the *Purusha*) being unchangeable, when the mind takes its form, it becomes conscious.

22. Coloured by the seer and the seen the mind is able to understand everything.

23. The mind though variegated by innumerable desires acts for another (the *Purusha*), because it acts in combination.

Complete Isolation

24. For the discriminating the perception of the mind as Atman ceases.

[1] The *Gunas* are the three substances, *Sattva, Rajas,* and *Tamas,* whose gross state is the sensible universe. Past and future arise from the different modes of manifestation of these *Gunas*—original note.

25. Then bent on discriminating, the mind attains the previous state of *Kaivalya* (isolation).

26. The thoughts that arise as obstructions to that are from impressions.

27. Their destruction is in the same manner as of ignorance, egoism, etc., as said before (II:10).

28. Even when arriving at the right discriminating knowledge of the essences, he who gives up the fruits, unto him comes as the result of perfect discrimination, the *Samādhi* called the cloud of virtue.

29. From that comes cessation of pains and works.

30. Then knowledge, bereft of covering and impurities, becoming infinite, the knowable becomes small.

31. Then are finished the successive transformations of the qualities, they having attained the end.

32. The changes that exist in relation to moments, and which are perceived at the other end (at the end of a series) are succession.

33. The resolution in the inverse order of the qualities, bereft of any motive of action for the *Purusha,* is *Kaivalya,* or it is the establishment of the power of knowledge in its own nature.

INDIAN IMAGINATION

The Ramayana

INTRODUCTION

MY LOVE AND TRUE RESPECT for India were born when I first read the Indian epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* in the present translation in my college days. In these two masterpieces we are brought closer to the atmosphere, ideals and customs of ancient Hindu life than by a hundred volumes of commentary on the *Upanishads,* and through them Hindu ideals, as well as Hindu men and women, become real to us. And the fact that Hindu imagination produced such masterpieces of literature, closely rivalling Homer in antiquity and in beauty and power of portraying human passions, is a definite pledge of the worth and richness of the Hindu civilization.

It is more than a figure of speech to say that the *Mahabharata* must be compared, if compared at all, with Homer's *Iliad,* and the *Ramayana,* with the *Odyssey.* To take the *Mahabharata,* the subject of the epic was the same, dealing with a long-drawn-out war between the Kurus and the Panchalas, as Homer dealt with the Trojan War. The treatment was the same: the delineation of the character of the warriors, the "tiger-waisted" Bhima, the "helmet-wearing" Arjuna (the Achilles of the epic), the royal and dignified Yudhishthir (suggesting Agamemnon), the vengeance of Arjuna for the death of his boy, the fierce contests and rounds of combats between heroes of the opposing camps, the Homeric speeches before the combats, the Councils of War, and the presence of gods and celestial spirits all reproduce the epic impression. The Hindu epic abounds more in episodic developments and discourses (such as the long discourse between Yudhishthir and Bhishma on the art of government) and has a wider canvas, with descriptions of forest life and later interpolations of discussions on questions of spiritual

truth (such as the *Bhagavad-Gita,* which is merely a reported conversation between the god Krishna and Arjuna before the battle, now accepted as a separate book). In magnitude, the *Mahabharata* comprises 100,000 couplets, which is the result of successive accretions in the easy *śloka* verse-form, while the *Ramayana* comprises 24,000 couplets, and is more the unified work of one writer. In so far as the *Ramayana* deals with the story of wanderings of Rama and his wife Sita, it may be said to resemble the *Odyssey*. Beyond that, the resemblance ceases, for while the story of Sita is that of the test of a woman's loyalty, like that of Penelope, the main theme is not that of Ulyssean adventures, but of domestic human passions, comprising such tragic material as is found in *King Lear, Macbeth* and *Othello*. It is also extremely important to note the tragic ending of Sita, where a happy ending would have been easy.

In modern terms, the *Mahabharata* may be said to be realistic, and the *Ramayana,* idealistic, in their respective handling of human characters. Sita in *Ramayana* is all that a woman could or should be, and is impressive by her sweetness and devotion. Draupadi in *Mahabharata,* on the other hand, may be any of the high-spirited modern women who live off one of New York's avenues, with her anger and her brooding for revenge—and for that reason more human. There is greater "realistic" truth in the full-blooded characters of the *Mahabharata,* higher passion and nobler resolve, fiercer jealousy and more biting scorn, and greater grandeur in many of its scenes. Yet it is undeniable there is greater spiritual beauty, greater softness and tenderness of emotion in *Ramayana.* The subject of *Mahbharata* is men and war; the subject of *Ramayana* is women and the home. If I judge human nature correctly, by the preference of fathers for daughters and mothers for sons, then it is inevitable that *Mahabharata* is the women's epic, while *Ramayana* is the men's. As it is impossible to include both epics, and highly desirable to reproduce one of them complete, therefore, as a man, I have chosen the *Ramayana.*

Truly, as the translator says, "The two together comprise the whole of the epic literature of the ancient Hindus; and the two together present us with the most graphic and lifelike picture that exists of the civilization and culture, the political and social life, the religion and thought of ancient India." And "to know the Indian epics is to understand the Indian people better." For it must be remembered, also, that these are not dead literature of long ago; they have influenced and molded

Indian life for thousands of years and are still a living factor today in the innermost depths of Indian consciousness.

Eventually, I am convinced India must win her freedom, not by fighting, because they will not resort to violence, and not by politics, for the English are superb at politics, but by Englishmen falling in love with Sita. Whether English stockholders will ever read Indian literature and poetry is doubtful, and it is not implied that the prospect is bright, for the great age of English appreciation of Hindu thought has declined. But anyone can see that one who loves Phidias would not like to bomb the Acropolis, and no one in his senses could believe that a people that could produce such epics ought to be ruled by others. It does not make sense.

Having said so much, I believe I am not in a position to improve upon an introduction to the *Ramayana,* which Romesh Dutt has so ably written in his "Epilogue." The following abstracts from the "Epilogue" will make the contents of this epic and its significance to the Indian people clear. The translation, reproduced here complete, is a condensation of the original. I have therefore kept the separate introductions to the different Books, which supply the outline of the epic story.

"It would appear that the original work ended with the sixth Book, which describes the return of the hero to his country and to his loving subjects. The seventh Book is called *Uttara* or Supplemental, and in it we are told something of the dimensions of the poem, apparently after the fatal process of additions and interpolations had gone on for centuries. We are informed that the poem consists of six Books and a Supplemental Book; and that it comprises 500 cantos and 24,000 couplets. And we are also told in this Supplemental Book that the descendants of Rama and his brothers founded some of the great towns and states which, we know from other sources, flourished in the fifth and fourth centuries before Christ. It is probable therefore that the Epic, commenced after 1000 B.C., had assumed something like its present shape a few centuries before the Christian Era.

"The *Mahabharata* grew out of the legends and traditions of a great historical war between the Kurus and the Panchalas; the *Ramayana* grew out of the recollections of the golden age of the Kosalas and the Videhas. The characters of the *Mahabharata* are characters of flesh and blood, with the virtues and crimes of great actors in the historic world; the characters of the *Ramayana* are more often the ideals of manly

devotion to truth, and of womanly faithfulness and love in domestic life. . . . As an heroic poem the *Mahabharata* stands on a higher level; as a poem delineating the softer emotions of our everyday life the *Ramayana* sends its roots deeper into the hearts and minds of the millions in India. . . . Without rivalling the heroic grandeur of the *Mahabharata,* the *Ramayana* is immeasurably superior in its delineation of those softer and perhaps deeper emotions which enter into our everyday life and hold the world together. And these descriptions, essentially of Hindu life, are yet so true to nature that they apply to all races and nations.

"There is something indescribably touching and tender in the description of the love of Rama for his subjects and the loyalty of his people towards Rama,—that loyalty which has ever been a part of the Hindu character in every age—

'As a father to his children to his loving men he came,
Blessed our homes and maids and matrons till our infants lisped his name,

For our humble woes and troubles Rama hath the ready tear,
To our humble tales of suffering Rama lends his willing ear!'

"Deeper than this was Rama's duty towards his father and his father's fondness for Rama; and the portion of the Epic which narrates the dark scheme by which the prince was at last torn from the heart and home of his dying father is one of the most powerful and pathetic passages in Indian literature. The stepmother of Rama, won by the virtues and the kindliness of the prince, regards his proposed coronation with pride and pleasure, but her old nurse creeps into her confidence like a creeping serpent, and envenoms her heart with the poison of her own wickedness. She arouses the slumbering jealousy of a woman and awakens the alarms of a mother, till—

'Like a slow but deadly poison worked the ancient nurse's tears,
And a wife's undying impulse mingled with a mother's fears!'

"The nurse's dark insinuations work on the mind of the queen till she becomes a desperate woman, resolved to maintain her own influence on her husband, and to see her own son on the throne. The determination of the young queen tells with terrible effect on the weakness and vacillation of the feeble old monarch, and Rama is banished at last. And the scene closes with a pathetic story in which the monarch recounts his misdeed of past years, accepts his present suffering as the fruit of that

misdeed, and dies in agony for his banished son. The inner workings of the human heart and of human motives, the dark intrigue of a scheming dependant, the awakening jealousy and alarm of a wife and a mother, the determination of a woman and an imperious queen, and the feebleness and despair and death of a fond old father and husband, have never been more vividly described. . . .

"It is truth and power in the depicting of such scenes, and not in the delineation of warriors and warlike incidents, that the *Ramayana* excels. It is in the delineation of domestic incidents, domestic affections, and domestic jealousies, which are appreciated by the prince and the peasant alike, that the *Ramayana* bases its appeal to the hearts of the millions in India. And beyond all this, the righteous devotion of Rama, and the faithfulness and womanly love of Sita, run like two threads of gold through the whole fabric of the Epic, and ennoble and sanctify the work in the eyes of Hindus.

"Sita holds a place in the hearts of women in India which no other creation of a poet's imagination holds among any other nation on earth. There is not a Hindu woman whose earliest and tenderest recollections do not cling round the story of Sita's sufferings and Sita's faithfulness, told in the nursery, taught in the family circle, remembered and cherished through life. Sita's adventures in a desolate forest and in a hostile prison only represent in an exaggerated form the humbler trials of a woman's life; and Sita's endurance and faithfulness teach her devotion to duty in all trials and troubles of life. 'For,' said Sita:

> 'For my mother often taught me and my father often spake,
> That her home the wedded woman doth beside her husband make,
> As the shadow to the substance, to her lord is faithful wife,
> And she parts not from her consort till she parts with fleeting life!
> Therefore bid me seek the jungle and in pathless forests roam,
> Where the wild deer freely ranges and the tiger makes his home,
> Happier than in father's mansions in the woods will Sita rove,
> Waste no thought on home or kindred, nestling in her husband's love!'

"The ideal of life was joy and beauty and gladness in ancient Greece; the ideal of life was piety and endurance and devotion in ancient India. The tale of Helen was a tale of womanly beauty and loveliness which charmed the western world. The tale of Sita was a tale of womanly faith and self-abnegation which charmed and fascinated the Hindu world. Repeated trials bring out in brighter relief the unfaltering truth of Sita's

character; she goes to a second banishment in the woods with the same trust and devotion to her lord as before, and she returns once more, and sinks into the bosom of her Mother Earth, true in death as she had been true in life. The creative imagination of the Hindus has conceived no loftier and holier character than Sita; the literature of the world has not produced a higher ideal of womanly love, womanly truth, and womanly devotion."

The Epic of Rama

Translated by Romesh Dutt

BOOK I SITA-SWAYAMVARA
(*The Bridal of Sita*)

THE EPIC relates to the ancient traditions of two powerful races, the Kosalas and the Videhas, who lived in Northern India between the twelfth and tenth centuries before Christ. The names Kosala and Videha in the singular number indicate the kingdoms—Oudh and North Behar —and in the plural number they mean the ancient races which inhabited those two countries.

According to the Epic, Dasa-ratha king of the Kosalas had four sons, the eldest of whom was Rama the hero of the poem. And Janak king of the Videhas had a daughter named Sita, who was miraculously born of a field furrow, and who is the heroine of the Epic.

Janak ordained a severe test for the hand of his daughter, and many a prince and warrior came and went away disappointed. Rama succeeded, and won Sita. The story of Rama's winning his bride, and of the marriage of his three brothers with the sister and cousins of Sita, forms the subject of this Book.

The portions translated in this Book form Section vi., Sections lxvii. to lxix., Section lxxiii., and Section lxxvii. of Book i. of the original text.

I Ayodhya, the Righteous City

Rich in royal worth and valour, rich in holy Vedic lore,
Dasa-ratha ruled his empire in the happy days of yore,

Loved of men in fair Ayodhya, sprung of ancient Solar Race,
Royal *rishi* in his duty, saintly *rishi*[1] in his grace,
Great as INDRA in his prowess, bounteous as KUVERA kind,
Dauntless deeds subdued his foemen, lofty faith subdued his mind!
Like the ancient monarch Manu, father of the human race,
Dasa-ratha ruled his people with a father's loving grace,
Truth and Justice swayed each action and each baser motive quelled
People's Love and Monarch's Duty every thought and deed impelled,
And his town like INDRA's city,—tower and dome and turret brave—
Rose in proud and peerless beauty on Sarayu's limpid wave!
Peaceful lived the righteous people, rich in wealth in merit high,
Envy dwelt not in their bosoms and their accents shaped no lie,
Fathers with their happy households owned their cattle, corn, and gold,
Galling penury and famine in Ayodhya had no hold,
Neighbours lived in mutual kindness helpful with their ample wealth,
None who begged the wasted refuse, none who lived by fraud and stealth!
And they wore the gem and earring, wreath and fragrant sandal paste,
And their arms were decked with bracelets, and their necks with *nishkas*[2] graced,
Cheat and braggart and deceiver lived not in the ancient town,
Proud despiser of the lowly wore not insults in their frown,
Poorer fed not on the richer, hireling friend upon the great,
None with low and lying accents did upon the proud man wait!
Men to plighted vows were faithful, faithful was each loving wife,
Impure thought and wandering fancy stained not holy wedded life,
Robed in gold and graceful garments, fair in form and fair in face,
Winsome were Ayodhya's daughters, rich in wit and woman's grace!
Twice-born men were free from passion, lust of gold and impure greed,
Faithful to their Rites and Scriptures, truthful in their word and deed,
Altar blazed in every mansion, from each home was bounty given,
Stooped no man to fulsome falsehood, questioned none the will of Heaven.
Kshatras bowed to holy Brahmans, Vaisyas to the Kshatras bowed
Toiling Sudras lived by labour, of their honest duty proud,
To the Gods and to the Fathers, to each guest in virtue trained,
Rites were done with true devotion as by holy writ ordained.

[1] Saint or anchorite.
[2] Coins often used for ornament.

Pure each caste in due observance, stainless was each ancient rite,
And the nation thrived and prospered by its old and matchless might,
And each man in truth abiding lived a long and peaceful life,
With his sons and with his grandsons, with his loved and honoured wife.
Thus was ruled the ancient city by her monarch true and bold,
As the earth was ruled by Manu in the misty days of old,
Troops who never turned in battle, fierce as fire and strong and brave,
Guarded well her lofty ramparts as the lions guard the cave.
Steeds like INDRA's in their swiftness came from far Kamboja's land,
From Vanaya and Vahlika and from Sindhu's rock-bound strand,
Elephants of mighty stature from the Vindhya mountains came,
Or from deep and darksome forests round Himalay's peaks of fame,
Matchless in their mighty prowess, peerless in their wondrous speed,
Nobler than the noble tuskers sprung from high celestial breed.
Thus Ayodhya, "virgin city,"—faithful to her haughty name,—
Ruled by righteous Dasa-ratha won a world-embracing fame,
Strong-barred gates and lofty arches, tower and dome and turret high
Decked the vast and peopled city fair as mansions of the sky.
Queens of proud and peerless beauty born of houses rich in fame,
Loved of royal Dasa-ratha to his happy mansion came,
Queen Kausalya blessed with virtue true and righteous Rama bore
Queen Kaikeyi young and beauteous bore him Bharat rich in lore,
Queen Simitra bore the bright twins, Lakshman and Satrughna bold,
Four brave princes served their father in the happy days of old!

II Mithila, and the Breaking of the Bow

Janak monarch of Videha spake his message near and far,—
He shall win my peerless Sita who shall bend my bow of war,—
Suitors came from farthest regions, warlike princes known to fame,
Vainly strove to wield the weapon, left Videha in their shame.
Viswa-mitra royal *rishi,* Rama true and Lakshman bold,
Came to fair Mithila's city from Ayodhya famed of old,
Spake in pride the royal *rishi:* "Monarch of Videha's throne,
Grant, the wondrous bow of RUDRA be to princely Rama shown."
Janak spake his royal mandate to his lords and warriors bold:
"Bring ye forth the bow of RUDRA decked in garlands and in gold,"
And his peers and proud retainers waiting on the monarch's call,
Brought the great and goodly weapon from the city's inner hall.

Stalwart men of ample stature pulled the mighty iron car
In which rested all-inviolate Janak's dreaded bow of war,
And where midst assembled monarchs sat Videha's godlike king,
With a mighty toil and effort did the eight-wheeled chariot bring.
"This the weapon of Videha," proudly thus the peers begun,
"Be it shewn to royal Rama, Dasa-ratha's righteous son:"
"This the bow," then spake the monarch to the *risha* famed of old,
To the true and righteous Rama and to Lakshman young and bold,
"This the weapon of my fathers prized by kings from age to age,
Mighty chiefs and sturdy warriors could not bend it, noble sage!
Gods before the bow of RUDRA have in righteous terror quailed,
Rakshas[1] fierce and stout *Asuras*[2] have in futile effort failed,
Mortal man will struggle vainly RUDRA's wondrous bow to bend,
Vainly strive to string the weapon and the shining dart to send,
Holy saint and royal *rishi,* here is Janak's ancient bow,
Shew it to Ayodhya's princes, speak to them my kingly vow!"
Viswa-mitra humbly listened to the words the monarch said,
To the brave and righteous Rama, Janak's mighty bow displayed,
Rama lifted high the cover of the pond'rous iron car,
Gazed with conscious pride and prowess on the mighty bow of war.
"Let me," humbly spake the hero, "on this bow my fingers place,
Let me lift and bend the weapon, help me with your loving grace."
"Be it so," the *rishi* answered, "be it so," the monarch said,
Rama lifted high the weapon on his stalwart arms displayed,
Wond'ring gazed the kings assembled as the son of Raghu's race
Proudly raised the bow of RUDRA with a warrior's stately grace,
Proudly strung the bow of RUDRA which the kings had tried in vain,
Drew the cord with force resistless till the weapon snapped in twain!
Like the thunder's pealing accent rose the loud terrific clang,
And the firm earth shook and trembled and the hills in echoes rang,
And the chiefs and gathered monarchs fell and fainted in their fear,
And the men of many nations shook the dreadful sound to hear!
Pale and white the startled monarchs slowly from their terror woke,
And with royal grace and greetings Janak to the *rishi* spoke:
"Now my ancient eyes have witnessed wond'rous deed by Rama done,
Deed surpassing thought or fancy wrought by Dasa-ratha's son,
And the proud and peerless princess, Sita glory of my house,
Sheds on me an added lustre as she weds a godlike spouse,

[1] Night demons. [2] Evil spirits.

True shall be my plighted promise, Sita dearer than my life,
Won by worth and wond'rous valour shall be Rama's faithful wife!
Grant us leave, O royal *rishi,* grant us blessings kind and fair,
Envoys mounted on my chariot to Ayodhya shall repair,
They shall speak to Rama's father glorious feat by Rama done,
They shall speak to Dasa-ratha, Sita is by valour won,
They shall say the noble princes safely live within our walls,
They shall ask him by his presence to adorn our palace halls!"
Pleased at heart the sage assented, envoys by the monarch sent,
To Ayodhya's distant city with the royal message went.

III The Embassy to Ayodhya

Three nights halting in their journey with their steeds fatigued and spent,
Envoys from Mithila's monarch to Ayodhya's city went,
And by royal mandate bidden stepped within the palace hall,
Where the ancient Dasa-ratha sat with peers and courtiers all,
And with greetings and obeisance spake their message calm and bold,
Softly fell their gentle accents as their happy tale they told.
"Greetings to thee, mighty monarch, greetings to each priest and peer,
Wishes for thy health and safety from Videha's king we bear,
Janak monarch of Videha for thy happy life hath prayed,
And by Viswa-mitra's bidding words of gladsome message said:
'Know on earth my plighted promise, spoke by heralds near and far,—
He shall win my peerless Sita who shall bend my bow of war,—
Monarchs came and princely suitors, chiefs and warriors known to fame,
Baffled in their fruitless effort left Mithila in their shame,
Rama came with gallant Lakshman by their proud preceptor led,
Bent and broke the mighty weapon, he the beauteous bride shall wed!
Rama strained the weapon stoutly till it snapped and broke in twain,
In the concourse of the monarchs, in the throng of arméd men,
Rama wins the peerless princess by the righteous will of Heaven,
I redeem my plighted promise—be thy kind permission given!
Monarch of Kosala's country! with each lord and peer and priest,
Welcome to Mithila's city, welcome to Videha's feast,
Joy thee in thy Rama's triumph, joy thee with a father's pride,
Let each prince of proud Kosala win a fair Videha-bride!'

These by Viswa-mitra's bidding are the words our monarch said,
This by Sata-nanda's counsel is the quest that he hath made."
Joyful was Kosala's monarch, spake to chieftains in the hall,
Vama-deva and Vasishtha and to priests and Brahmans all:
"Priests and peers! in far Mithila, so these friendly envoys tell,
Righteous Rama, gallant Lakshman, in the royal palace dwell,
And our brother of Videha prizes Rama's warlike pride,
To each prince of proud Kosala yields a fair Videha-bride,
If it please ye, priests and chieftains, speed we to Mithila fair,
World-renowned is Janak's virtue, Heaven-inspired his learning rare!"
Spake each peer and holy Brahman: "Dasa-ratha's will be done!"
Spake the king unto the envoys: "Part we with the rising sun!"
Honoured with a regal honour, welcomed to a rich repast,
Gifted envoys from Mithila day and night in gladness passed!

IV Meeting of Janak and Dasa-ratha

On Ayodhya's tower and turret now the golden morning woke,
Dasa-ratha girt by courtiers thus to wise Sumantra spoke:
"Bid the keepers of my treasure with their waggons lead the way,
Ride in front with royal riches, gold and gems in bright array,
Bid my warriors skilled in duty lead the four-fold ranks of war,
Elephants and noble chargers, serried foot and battle-car,
Bid my faithful chariot-driver harness quick each car of state,
With the fleetest of my coursers, and upon my orders wait.
Vama-deva and Vasishtha versed in *Veda's* ancient lore,
Kasyapa and good Jabali sprung from holy saints of yore,
Markandeya in his glory, Katyayana in his pride,
Let each priest and proud preceptor with Kosala's monarch ride,
Harness to my royal chariot strong and stately steeds of war,
For the envoys speed my journey and the way is long and far."
With each priest and proud retainer Dasa-ratha led the way,
Glittering ranks of forces followed in their four-fold dread array,
Four days on the way they journeyed till they reached Videha's land,
Janak with a courteous welcome came to greet the royal band.
Joyously Videha's monarch greeted every priest and peer,
Greeted ancient Dasa-ratha in his accents soft and clear:
"Hast thou come, my royal brother, on my house to yield thy grace,
Hast thou made a peaceful journey, pride of Raghu's royal race?

Welcome! for Mithila's people seek my royal guest to greet,
Welcome! for thy sons of valour long their loving sire to meet,
Welcome to the priest Vasishtha versed in *Veda's* ancient lore,
Welcome every righteous *rishi* sprung from holy saints of yore!
And my evil fates are vanquished and my race is sanctified,
With the warlike race of Raghu thus in loving bonds allied,
Sacrifice and rites auspicious we ordain with rising sun,
Ere the evening's darkness closes, happy nuptials shall be done!"
Thus in kind and courteous accents Janak spake his purpose high,
And his royal love responding, Dasa-ratha made reply:
"Gift betokens giver's bounty,—so our ancient sages sing,—
And thy righteous fame and virtue grace thy gift, Videha's king!
World-renowned is Janak's bounty, Heaven-inspired his holy grace,
And we take his boon and blessing as an honour to our race!"
Royal grace and kingly greeting marked the ancient monarch's word.
Janak with a grateful pleasure Dasa-ratha's answer heard,
And the Brahmans and preceptors joyously the midnight spent,
And in converse pure and pleasant and in sacred sweet content.
Righteous Rama, gallant Lakshman piously their father greet,
Duly make their deep obeisance, humbly touch his royal feet,
And the night is filled with gladness for the king revered and old,
Honoured by the saintly Janak, greeted by his children bold,
On Mithila's tower and turret stars their silent vigils keep,
When each sacred rite completed, Janak seeks his nightly sleep.

V The Preparation

All his four heroic princes now with Dasa-ratha stayed
In Mithila's ancient city, and their father's will obeyed,
Thither came the bold Yudhajit prince of proud Kaikeya's line,
On the day that Dasa-ratha made his gifts of gold and kine,
And he met the ancient monarch, for his health and safety prayed,
Made his bow and due obeisance and in gentle accents said:
"List, O king! my royal father, monarch of Kaikeya's race,
Sends his kindly love and greetings with his blessings and his grace,
And he asks if Dasa-ratha prospers in his wonted health,
If his friends and fond relations live in happiness and wealth.
Queen Kaikeyi is my sister, and to see her son I came,
Bharat prince of peerless virtue, worthy of his father's fame,

Aye, to see that youth of valour, by my royal father sent,
To Ayodhya's ancient city with an anxious heart I went,
In the city of Mithila,—thus did all thy subjects say,—
With his sons and with his kinsmen Dasa-ratha makes his stay,
Hence in haste I journeyed hither, travelling late and early dawn,
For to do thee due obeisance and to greet my sister's son!"
Spake the young and proud Kaikeya, dear and duly-greeted guest,
Dasa-ratha on his brother choicest gifts and honours pressed.
Brightly dawned the happy morning, and Kosala's king of fame
With his sons and wise Vasishtha to the sacred *yajna*[1] came,
Rama and his gallant brothers decked in gem and jewel bright,
In th' auspicious hour of morning did the blest *Kautuka*[2] rite,
And beside their royal father piously the princes stood,
And to fair Videha's monarch spake Vasishtha wise and good:
"Dasa-ratha waits expectant with each proud and princely son,
Waits upon the bounteous giver, for each holy rite is done,
'Twixt the giver and the taker sacred word is sacred deed,
Seal with gift thy plighted promise, let the nuptial rites proceed!"
Thus the righteous-souled Vasishtha to Videha's monarch prayed,
Janak versed in holy *Vedas* thus in courteous accents said:
"Wherefore waits the king expectant? Free to him this royal dome,
Since my kingdom is his empire and my palace is his home,
And the maidens, flame-resplendent, done each fond *Kautuka* rite,
Beaming in their bridal beauty tread the sacrificial site!
I beside the lighted altar wait upon thy sacred hest,
And auspicious is the moment, sage Vasishtha knows the rest,
Let the peerless Dasa-ratha, proud Kosala's king of might,
With his sons and honoured sages enter on the holy site,
Let the righteous sage Vasishtha, sprung from Vedic saints of old,
Celebrate the happy wedding; be the sacred *mantras*[3] told!"

VI The Wedding

Sage Vasishtha skilled in duty placed Videha's honoured king,
Viswa-mitra, Sata-nanda, all within the sacred ring,

[1] Sacrifice.
[2] Wedding investiture with the nuptial chord.
[3] Hymns or incantations.

And he raised the holy altar as the ancient writs ordain,
Decked and graced with scented garlands grateful unto gods and men,
And he set the golden ladles, vases pierced by artists skilled,
Holy censers fresh and fragrant, cups with sacred honey filled,
Sanka bowls and shining salvers, *arghya*[1] plates for honoured guest,
Parchéd rice arranged in dishes, corn unhusked that filled the rest,
And with careful hand Vasishtha grass around the altar flung,
Offered gift to lighted AGNI and the sacred *mantra* sung!
Softly came the sweet-eyed Sita,—bridal blush upon her brow,—
Rama in his manly beauty came to take the sacred vow,
Janak placed his beauteous daughter facing Dasa-ratha's son,
Spake with father's fond emotion and the holy rite was done:
"This is Sita child of Janak, dearer unto him than life,
Henceforth sharer of thy virtue, be she, prince, thy faithful wife,
Of thy weal and woe partaker, be she thine in every land,
Cherish her in joy and sorrow, clasp her hand within thy hand,
As the shadow to the substance, to her lord is faithful wife,
And my Sita best of women follows thee in death or life!"
Tears bedew his ancient bosom, gods and men his wishes share,
And he sprinkles holy water on the blest and wedded pair.
Next he turned to Sita's sister, Urmila of beauty rare,
And to Lakshman young and valiant spake in accents soft and fair:
"Lakshman, dauntless in thy duty, loved of men and Gods above,
Take my dear devoted daughter, Urmila of stainless love,
Lakshman, fearless in thy virtue, take thy true and faithful wife,
Clasp her hand within thy fingers, be she thine in death or life!"
To his brother's child Mandavi, Janak turned with father's love,
Yielded her to righteous Bharat, prayed for blessings from above:
"Bharat, take the fair Mandavi, be she thine in death or life,
Clasp her hand within thy fingers as thy true and faithful wife!"
Last of all was Sruta-kriti, fair in form and fair in face,
And her gentle name was honoured for her acts of righteous grace,
"Take her by the hand, Satrughna, be she thine in death or life,
As the shadow to the substance, to her lord is faithful wife!"
Then the princes held the maidens, hand embraced in loving hand,
And Vasishtha spake the *mantra,* holiest priest in all the land,
And as ancient rite ordaineth, and as sacred laws require,
Stepped each bride and princely bridegroom round the altar's lighted fire,

[1] Offering to an honored guest.

Round Videha's ancient monarch, round the holy *rishis* all,
Lightly stepped the gentle maidens, proudly stepped the princes tall!
And a rain of flowers descended from the sky serene and fair,
And a soft celestial music filled the fresh and fragrant air,
Bright *Gandharvas* skilled in music waked the sweet celestial song,
Fair *Apsaras*[1] in their beauty on the greensward tripped along!
As the flowery rain descended and the music rose in pride,
Thrice around the lighted altar every bridegroom led his bride,
And the nuptial rites were ended, princes took their brides away,
Janak followed with his courtiers, and the town was proud and gay!

VII Return to Ayodhya

With his wedded sons and daughters and his guard in bright array,
To the famed and fair Ayodhya, Dasa-ratha held his way,
And they reached the ancient city decked with banners bright and brave,
And the voice of drum and trumpet hailed the home-returning brave.
Fragrant blossoms strewed the pathway, song of welcome filled the air,
Joyous men and merry women issued forth in garments fair,
And they lifted up their faces and they waved their hands on high,
And they raised the voice of welcome as their righteous king drew nigh.
Greeted by his loving subjects, welcomed by his priests of fame,
Dasa-ratha with the princes to his happy city came,
With the brides and stately princes in the town he held his way,
Entered slow his lofty palace bright as peak of Himalay.
Queen Kausalya blessed with virtue, Queen Kaikeyi in her pride,
Queen Sumitra sweetly loving, greeted every happy bride,
Soft-eyed Sita noble-destined, Urmila of spotless fame,
Mandavi and Sruta-kirti to their loving mothers came.
Decked in silk and queenly garments they performed each pious rite,
Brought their blessings on the household, bowed to Gods of holy might,
Bowed to all the honoured elders, blest the children with their love,
And with soft and sweet endearment by their loving consorts moved.
Happy were the wedded princes peerless in their warlike might,
And they dwelt in stately mansions like KUVERA's mansions bright.
Loving wife and troops of kinsmen, wealth and glory on them wait,
Filial love and fond affection sanctify their happy fate.

[1] Celestial nymphs.

Once when on the palace chambers bright the golden morning woke,
To his son the gentle Bharat, thus the ancient monarch spoke:
"Know, my son, the prince Kaikeya, Yudajit of warlike fame,
Queen Kaikeyi's honoured brother, from his distant regions came,
He hath come to take thee, Bharat, to Kaikeya's monarch bold,
Go and stay with them a season, greet thy grandsire loved of old."
Bharat heard with filial duty and he hastened to obey,
Took with him the young Satrughna in his grandsire's home to stay,
And from Rama and from Lakshman parted they with many a tear,
From their young and gentle consorts, from their parents ever dear,
And Kaikeya with the princes, with his guards and troopers gay,
To his father's western regions gladsome held his onward way.
Rama with a pious duty,—favoured by the Gods above,—
Tended still his ancient father with a never-faltering love,
In his father's sacred mandate still his noblest Duty saw,
In the weal of subject nations recognised his foremost Law!
And he pleased his happy mother with a fond and filial care,
And his elders and his kinsmen with devotion soft and fair,
Brahmans blessed the righteous Rama for his faith in gods above,
People in the town and hamlet blessed him with their loyal love!
With a woman's whole affection fond and trusting Sita loved,
And within her faithful bosom loving Rama lived and moved,
And he loved her, for their parents chose her as his faithful wife,
Loved her for her peerless beauty, for her true and trustful life,
Loved and dwelt within her bosom though he wore a form apart,
Rama in a sweet communion lived in Sita's loving heart!
Days of joy and months of gladness o'er the gentle Sita flew,
As she like the QUEEN OF BEAUTY brighter in her graces grew,
And as VISHNU with his consort dwells in skies, alone, apart,
Rama in a sweet communion lived in Sita's loving heart!

BOOK II VANA-GAMANA-ADESA
(*The Banishment*)

THE EVENTS NARRATED in this Book occupy scarcely two days. The description of Rama's princely virtues and the rejoicings at his proposed coronation, with which the Book begins, contrast with much dramatic force and effect with the dark intrigues which follow, and which end in his cruel banishment for fourteen years.

The portions translated in this Book form Sections i., ii., vi., and vii., portions of Sections x. to xiii., and the whole of Section xviii. of Book ii. of the original text.

I The Council Convened

Thus the young and brave Satrughna, Bharat ever true and bold,
Went to warlike western regions where Kaikeyas lived of old,
Where the ancient Aswa-pati ruled his kingdom broad and fair,
Hailed the sons of Dasa-ratha with a grandsire's loving care.
Tended with a fond affection, guarded with a gentle sway,
Still the princes of their father dreamt and thought by night and day,
And their father in Ayodhya, great of heart and stout of hand,
Thought of Bharat and Satrughna living in Kaikeya's land.
For his great and gallant princes were to him his life and light,
Were a part of Dasa-ratha like his hands and arms of might,
But of all his righteous children righteous Rama won his heart,
As SWAYAMBHU of all creatures, was his dearest, holiest part,
For his Rama strong and stately was his eldest and his best,
Void of every baser passion and with every virtue blest!
Soft in speech, sedate and peaceful, seeking still the holy path,
Calm in conscious worth and valour, taunt nor cavil waked his wrath,
In the field of war excelling, boldest warrior midst the bold,
In the palace chambers musing on the tales by elders told,
Faithful to the wise and learned, truthful in his deed and word,
Rama dearly loved his people and his people loved their lord!
To the Brahmans pure and holy Rama due obeisance made,
To the poor and to the helpless deeper love and honour paid,
Spirit of his race and nation was to high-souled Rama given,
Thoughts that widen human glory, deeds that ope the gates of heaven.
Not intent on idle cavil Rama spake with purpose high,
And the God of speech might envy when he spake or made reply,
In the learning of the *Vedas* highest meed and glory won,
In the skill of arms the father scarcely matched the gallant son!
Taught by sages and by elders in the manners of his race,
Rama grew in social virtues and each soft endearing grace,
Taught by inborn pride and wisdom patient purpose to conceal,
Deep determined was his effort, dauntless was his silent will!

Peerless in his skill and valour steed and elephant to tame,
Dauntless leader of his forces, matchless in his warlike fame,
Higher thought and nobler duty did the righteous Rama move,
By his toil and by his virtues still he sought his people's love!
Dasa-ratha marked his Rama with each kingly virtue blest,
And from lifelong royal duties now he sought repose and rest:
"Shall I see my son anointed, seated on Kosala's throne,
In the evening of my lifetime ere my days on earth be done,
Shall I place my ancient empire in the youthful Rama's care,
Seek for me a higher duty and prepare for life more fair?"
Pondering thus within his bosom counsel from his courtiers sought,
And to crown his Rama, Regent, was his purpose and his thought,
For strange signs and diverse tokens now appeared on earth and sky,
And his failing strength and vigour spoke his end approaching nigh,
And he witnessed Rama's virtues filling all the world with love,
As the full-moon's radiant lustre fills the earth from skies above!
Dear to him appeared his purpose, Rama to his people dear,
Private wish and public duty made his path serene and clear,
Dasa-ratha called his Council, summoned chiefs from town and plain,
Welcomed too from distant regions monarchs and the kings of men,
Mansions meet for prince and chieftain to his guests the monarch gave.
Gracious as the Lord of Creatures held the gathering rich and brave!
Nathless to Kosala's Council nor Videha's monarch came,
Nor the warlike chief Kaikeya, Aswa-pati king of fame,
To those kings and near relations, ancient Dasa-ratha meant,
Message of the proud anointment with his greetings would be sent.
Brightly dawned the day of gathering; in the lofty Council Hall
Stately chiefs and ancient burghers came and mustered one and all,
And each prince and peer was seated on his cushion rich and high,
And on monarch Dasa-ratha eager turned his anxious eye,
Girt by crownéd kings and chieftains, burghers from the town and plain,
Dasa-ratha shone like INDRA girt by heaven's immortal train!

II The People Consulted

With the voice of pealing thunder Dasa-ratha spake to all,
To the princes and the burghers gathered in Ayodhya's hall:
"Known to all, the race of Raghu rules this empire broad and fair,
And hath ever loved and cherished subjects with a father's care,

In my fathers' footstops treading I have sought the ancient path,
Nursed my people as my children, free from passion, pride and wrath,
Underneath this white umbrella, seated on this royal throne,
I have toiled to win their welfare and my task is almost done!
Years have passed of fruitful labour, years of work by fortune blest,
And the evening of my lifetime needs, my friends, the evening's rest,
Years have passed in watchful effort, Law and Duty to uphold,
Effort needing strength and prowess—and my feeble limbs are old!
Peers and burghers, let your monarch, now his lifelong labour done,
For the weal of loving subjects on his empire seat his son,
INDRA-like in peerless valour, *rishi*-like in holy lore,
Rama follows Dasa-ratha, but in virtues stands before!
Throned in Pushya's constellation shines the moon with fuller light,
Throned to rule his father's empire Rama wins a loftier might,
He will be your gracious monarch favoured well by FORTUNE's QUEEN,
By his virtue and his valour lord of earth he might have been!
Speak your thoughts and from this bosom lift a load of toil and care,
On the proud throne of my fathers let me place a peerless heir,
Speak your thought, my chiefs and people, if this purpose please you well,
Or if wiser, better counsel in your wisdom ye can tell,
Speak your thoughts without compulsion, though this plan to me be dear,
If some middle course were wiser, if some other way were clear!"
Gathered chieftains hailed the mandate with applauses long and loud,
As the peafowls hail the thunder of the dark and laden cloud,
And the gathered subjects echoed loud and long the welcome sound,
Till the voices of the people shook the sky and solid ground!
Brahmans versed in laws of duty, chieftains in their warlike pride,
Countless men from town and hamlet heard the mandate far and wide,
And they met in consultation, joyously with one accord,
Freely and in measured accents, gave their answer to their lord:
"Years of toil and watchful labour weigh upon thee, king of men,
Young in years is righteous Rama, Heir and Regent let him reign,
We would see the princely Rama, Heir and Regent duly made,
Riding on the royal tusker in the white umbrella's shade!"
Searching still their secret purpose, seeking still their thought to know,
Spake again the ancient monarch in his measured words and slow:
"I would know your inner feelings, loyal thoughts and whispers kind,
For a doubt within me lingers and a shadow clouds my mind,

True to Law and true to Duty while I rule this kingdom fair,
Wherefore would you see my Rama seated as the Regent Heir?"
"We would see him Heir and Regent, Dasa-ratha, ancient lord,
For his heart is blessed with valour, virtue marks his deed and word,
Lives not man in all the wide earth who excels the stainless youth,
In his loyalty to Duty, in his love of righteous Truth,
Truth impels his thought and action, Truth inspires his soul with grace,
And his virtue fills the wide earth and exalts his ancient race!
Bright Immortals know his valour; with his brother Lakshman bold
He hath never failed to conquer hostile town or castled hold,
And returning from his battles, from the duties of the war,
Riding on his royal tusker or his all-resistless car,
As a father to his children to his loving men he came,
Blessed our homes and maids and matrons till our infants lisped his name,
For our humble woes and troubles Rama hath the ready tear,
To our humble tales of suffering Rama lends his willing ear!
Happy is the royal father who hath such a righteous son,
For in town and mart and hamlet every heart hath Rama won,
Burghers and the toiling tillers tales of Rama's kindness say,
Man and infant, maid and matron, morn and eve for Rama pray,
To the Gods and bright Immortals we our inmost wishes send,
May the good and godlike Rama on his father's throne ascend,
Great in gifts and great in glory, Rama doth our homage own,
We would see the princely Rama seated on his father's throne!"

III The City Decorated

With his consort pious Rama, pure in deed and pure in thought,
After evening's due ablutions NARAYANA's chamber sought,
Prayed unto the Lord of Creatures, NARAYANA Ancient Sire,
Placed his offering on his forehead, poured it on the lighted fire,
Piously partook the remnant, sought for NARAYANA's aid,
As he kept his fast and vigils on the grass of *kusa*[1] spread.
With her lord the saintly Sita silent passed the sacred night,
Contemplating World's Preserver, Lord of Heaven's ethereal height,
And within the sacred chamber on the grass of *kusa* lay,
Till the crimson streaks of morning ushered in the festive day,

[1] Grass strewn round the altar at sacrifice.

Till the royal bards and minstrels chanted forth the morning call,
Pealing through the holy chamber, echoing through the royal hall.
Past the night of sacred vigils, in his silken robes arrayed,
Message of the proud anointment Rama to the Brahmans said,
And the Brahmans spake to burghers that the festive day was come,
Till the mart and crowded pathway rang with note of pipe and drum,
And the townsmen heard rejoicing of the vigils of the night,
Kept by Rama and by Sita for the day's auspicious rite.
Rama shall be Heir and Regent, Rama shall be crowned to-day,—
Rapid flew the gladdening message with the morning's gladsome ray,
And the people of the city, maid and matron, man and boy,
Decorated fair Ayodhya in their wild tumultuous joy!
On the temple's lofty steeple high as cloud above the air,
On the crossing of the pathways, in the garden green and fair,
On the merchant's ample warehouse, on the shop with stores displayed,
On the mansion of the noble by the cunning artist made,
On the gay and bright pavilion, on the high and shady trees,
Banners rose and glittering streamers, flags that fluttered in the breeze!
Actors gay and nimble dancers, singers skilled in lightsome song,
With their antics and their music pleased the gay and gathered throng,
And the people met in conclaves, spake of Rama, Regent Heir,
And the children by the roadside lisped of Rama brave and fair!
Women wove the scented garland, merry maids the censer lit,
Men with broom and sprinkled water swept the spacious mart and street,
Rows of trees and posts they planted hung with lamps for coming night,
That the midnight dark might rival splendour of the noonday light!
Troops of men and merry children laboured with a loving care,
Woman's skill and woman's fancy made the city passing fair,
So that good and kindly Rama might his people's toil approve,
So that sweet and soft-eyed Sita might accept her people's love!
Groups of joyous townsmen gathered in the square or lofty hall,
Praised the monarch Dasa-ratha, regent Rama young and tall:
"Great and good is Dasa-ratha born of Raghu's royal race,
In the fulness of his lifetime on his son he grants his grace,
And we hail the rite auspicious for our prince of peerless might,
He will guard us by his valour, he will save our cherished right,
Dear unto his loving brothers in his father's palace hall,
As is Rama to his brothers dear is Rama to us all,

Long live ancient Dasa-ratha king of Raghu's royal race,
We shall see his son anointed by his father's righteous grace!"
Thus of Rama's consecration spake the burghers one and all,
And the men from distant hamlets poured within the city wall,
From the confines of the empire, north and south and west and east,
Came to see the consecration and to share the royal feast!
And the rolling tide of nations raised their voices loud and high,
Like the tide of sounding ocean when the full moon lights the sky,
And Ayodhya thronged by people from the hamlet, mart and lea,
Was tumultuous like the ocean thronged by creatures of the sea!

IV Intrigue

In the inner palace chamber stood the proud and peerless queen,
With a mother's joy Kaikeyi gaily watched the festive scene,
But with deep and deadly hatred Manthara, her nurse and maid,
Marked the city bright with banners, and in scornful accents said:
"Take thy presents back, Kaikeyi, for they ill befit the day,
And when clouds of sorrow darken, ill beseems thee to be gay,
And thy folly moves my laughter though an anguish wakes my sigh,
For a gladness stirs thy bosom when thy greatest woe is nigh!
Who that hath a woman's wisdom, who that is a prudent wife,
Smiles in joy when prouder rival triumphs in the race of life,
How can hapless Queen Kaikeyi greet this deed of darkness done,
When the favoured Queen Kausalya wins the empire for her son?
Know the truth, O witless woman! Bharat is unmatched in fame,
Rama, deep and darkly jealous, dreads thy Bharat's rival claim,
Younger Lakshman with devotion doth on eldest Rama wait,
Young Satrughna with affection follows Bharat's lofty fate,
Rama dreads no rising danger from the twins, the youngest-born,
But thy Bharat's claims and virtues fill his jealous heart with scorn!
Trust me, queen, thy Bharat's merits are too well and widely known,
And he stands too near and closely by a rival brother's throne,
Rama hath a wolf-like wisdom and a fang to reach the foe,
And I tremble for thy Bharat, Heaven avert untimely woe!
Happy is the Queen Kausalya, they will soon anoint her son,
When on Pushya's constellation gaily rides to-morrow's moon,
Happy is the Queen Kausalya in her regal pomp and state,
And Kaikeyi like a bond-slave must upon her rival wait!

Wilt thou do her due obeisance as we humble women do,
Will thy proud and princely Bharat as his brother's henchman go,
Will thy Bharat's gentle consort, fairest princess in this land,
In her tears and in her anguish wait on Sita's proud command?"
With a woman's scornful anger Manthara proclaimed her grief,
With a mother's love for Rama thus Kaikeyi answered brief:
"What inspires thee, wicked woman, thus to rail in bitter tone,
Shall not Rama, best and eldest, fill his father's royal throne,
What alarms thee, crooked woman, in the happy rites begun,
Shall not Rama guard his brothers as a father guards his son?
And when Rama's reign is over, shall not Gods my Bharat speed,
And by law and ancient custom shall not younger son succeed,
In the present bliss of Rama and in Bharat's future hope,
What offends thee, senseless woman, wherefore dost thou idly mope?
Dear is Rama as my Bharat, ever duteous in his ways,
Rama honours Queen Kausalya, loftier honour to me pays,
Rama's realm is Bharat's kingdom, ruling partners they shall prove,
For himself than for his brothers Rama owns no deeper love!"
Scorn and anger shook her person and her bosom heaved a sigh,
As in wilder, fiercer accents Manthara thus made reply:
"What insensate rage or madness clouds thy heart and blinds thine eye,
Courting thus thy own disaster, courting danger dread and high,
What dark folly clouds thy vision to the workings of thy foe,
Heedless thus to seek destruction and to sink in gulf of woe?
Know, fair queen, by law and custom, son ascends the throne of pride,
Rama's son succeedeth Rama, luckless Bharat steps aside,
Brothers do not share a kingdom, nor can one by one succeed,
Mighty were the civil discord if such custom were decreed!
For to stop all war and tumult, thus the ancient laws ordain,
Eldest son succeeds his father, younger children may not reign,
Bharat barred from Rama's empire, vainly decked with royal grace,
Friendless, joyless, long shall wander, alien from his land and race!
Thou hast borne the princely Bharat, nursed him from thy gentle breast,
To a queen and to a mother need a prince's claims be pressed,
To a thoughtless heedless mother must I Bharat's virtues plead,
Must the Queen Kaikeyi witness Queen Kausalya's son succeed?
Trust thy old and faithful woman who hath nursed thee, youthful queen,
And in great and princely houses many darksome deeds hath seen,

Trust my word, the wily Rama for his spacious empire's good,
Soon will banish friendless Bharat and secure his peace with blood!
Thou hast sent the righteous Bharat to thy ancient father's land,
And Satrughna young and valiant doth beside his brother stand,
Young in years and generous-hearted, they will grow in mutual love,
As the love of elder Rama doth in Lakshman's bosom move.
Young companions grow in friendship, and our ancient legends tell,
Weeds protect a forest monarch which the woodman's axe would fell,
Crownéd Rama unto Lakshman will a loving brother prove,
But for Bharat and Satrughna, Rama's bosom owns no love,
And a danger thus ariseth if the elder wins the throne,
Haste thee, heedless Queen Kaikeyi, save the younger and thy son!
Speak thy mandate to thy husband, let thy Bharat rule at home,
In the deep and pathless jungle let the banished Rama roam,
This will please thy ancient father and thy father's kith and kin,
This will please the righteous people, Bharat knows no guile or sin!
Speak thy mandate to thy husband, win thy son a happy fate,
Doom him not to Rama's service or his unrelenting hate,
Let not Rama in his rancour shed a younger brother's blood,
As the lion slays the tiger in the deep and echoing wood!
With the magic of thy beauty thou hast won thy monarch's heart,
Queen Kausalya's bosom rankles with a woman's secret smart,
Let her not with woman's vengeance turn upon her prouder foe,
And as crownéd Rama's mother venge her in Kaikeyi's woe,
Mark my word, my child Kaikeyi, much these ancient eyes have seen,
Rama's rule is death to Bharat, insult to my honoured queen!"
Like a slow but deadly poison worked the ancient nurse's tears,
And a wife's undying impulse mingled with a mother's fears,
Deep within Kaikeyi's bosom worked a woman's jealous thought,
Speechless in her scorn and anger mourner's dark retreat she sought.

V The Queen's Demand

Rama shall be crowned at sunrise, so did royal bards proclaim,
Every rite arranged and ordered, Dasa-ratha homeward came,
To the fairest of his consorts, dearest to his ancient heart,
Came the king with eager gladness joyful message to impart,
Radiant as the Lord of Midnight, ere the eclipse casts its gloom,
Came the old and ardent monarch heedless of his darksome doom!

Through the shady palace garden where the peacock wandered free,
Lute and lyre poured forth their music, parrot flew from tree to tree,
Through the corridor of creepers, painted rooms by artists done,
And the halls where scented *Champak*[1] and the flaming *Asok*[2] shone,
Through the portico of splendour graced by silver, tusk and gold,
Radiant with his thought of gladness walked the monarch proud and bold.
Through the lines of scented blossoms which by limpid waters shone,
And the rooms with seats of silver, ivory bench and golden throne,
Through the chamber of confection, where each viand wooed the taste,
Every object in profusion as in regions of the blest,
Through Kaikeyi's inner closet lighted with a softened sheen,
Walked the king with eager longing,—but Kaikeyi was not seen!
Thoughts of love and gentle dalliance woke within his ancient heart,
And the magic of her beauty and the glamour of her art,
With a soft desire the monarch vainly searched the vanished fair,
Found her not in royal chamber, found her not in gay parterre!
Filled with love and longing languor loitered not the radiant queen,
In her soft voluptuous chamber, in the garden, grove or green.
And he asked the faithful warder of Kaikeyi loved and lost,
She who served him with devotion and his wishes never crost,
Spake the warder in his terror that the queen with rage distraught,
Weeping silent tears of anguish had the mourner's chamber sought!
Thither flew the stricken monarch; on the bare and unswept ground,
Trembling with tumultuous passion was the Queen Kaikeyi found,
On the cold uncovered pavement sorrowing lay the weeping wife,
Young wife of an ancient husband, dearer than his heart and life!
Like a bright and blossoming creeper rudely severed from the earth,
Like a fallen fair *Apsara*,[3] beauteous nymph of heavenly birth,
Like a female forest-ranger bleeding from the hunter's dart,
Whom her mate the forest-monarch soothes with soft endearing art,
Lay the queen in tears of anguish! And with sweet and gentle word
To the lotus-eyéd lady softly spake her loving lord:
"Wherefore thus, my Queen and Empress, sorrow-laden is thy heart,
Who with daring slight or insult seeks to cause thy bosom smart?

[1] A tree with yellow blossoms; its blossom.
[2] Name of a bright flower.
[3] Celestial nymph.

If some unknown ailment pains thee, evil spirit of the air,
Skilled physicians wait upon thee, priests with incantations fair,
If from human foe some insult, wipe thy tears and doom his fate,
Rich reward or royal vengeance shall upon thy mandate wait!
Wilt thou doom to death the guiltless, free whom direst sins debase,
Wilt thou lift the poor and lowly or the proud and great disgrace,
Speak, and I and all my courtiers Queen Kaikeyi's hest obey,
For thy might is boundless, Empress, limitless thy regal sway!
Rolls my chariot-wheel revolving from the sea to farthest sea,
And the wide earth is my empire, monarchs list my proud decree,
Nations of the eastern regions and of Sindhu's western wave,
Brave Saurashtras and the races who the ocean's dangers brave,
Vangas, Angas and Magadhas, warlike Matsyas of the west,
Kasis and the southern races, brave Kosalas first and best,
Nations of my world-wide empire, rich in corn and sheep and kine,
All shall serve my Queen Kaikeyi and their treasures all are thine,
Speak, command thy king's obedience, and thy wrath will melt away,
Like the melting snow of winter 'neath the sun's reviving ray!"
Blinded was the ancient husband as he lifted up her head,
Heedless oath and word he plighted that her wish should be obeyed,
Scheming for a fatal purpose, inly then Kaikeyi smiled,
And by sacred oath and promise bound the monarch love-beguiled:
"Thou hast given, Dasa-ratha, troth and word and royal oath,
Three and thirty Gods be witness, watchers of the righteous truth,
Sun and Moon and Stars be witness, Sky and Day and sable Night,
Rolling Worlds and this our wide Earth, and each dark and unseen wight,
Witness Rangers of the forest, Household Gods that guard us both,
Mortal beings and Immortal,—witness ye the monarch's oath,
Ever faithful to his promise, ever truthful in his word,
Dasa-ratha grants my prayer, Spirits and the Gods have heard!
Call to mind, O righteous monarch, days when in a bygone strife,
Warring with thy foes immortal thou hadst almost lost thy life,
With a woman's loving tendance poor Kaikeyi cured thy wound,
Till from death and danger rescued, thou wert by a promise bound,
Two rewards my husband offered, what my loving heart might seek,
Long delayed their wished fulfilment,—now let poor Kaikeyi speak,
And if royal deeds redeem not what thy royal lips did say,
Victim to thy broken promise Queen Kaikeyi dies to-day!

By these rites ordained for Rama,—such the news my menials bring,—
Let my Bharat, and not Rama, be anointed Regent King,
Wearing skins and matted tresses, in the cave or hermit's cell,
Fourteen years in Dandak's forests let the elder Rama dwell,
These are Queen Kaikeyi's wishes, these are boons for which I pray,
I would see my son anointed, Rama banished on this day!"

VI The King's Lament

"Is this torturing dream or madness, do my feeble senses fail,
O'er my darkened mind and bosom doth a fainting fit prevail?"
So the stricken monarch pondered and in hushed and silent fear,
Looked on her as on a tigress looks the dazed and stricken deer,
Lying on the unswept pavement still he heaved the choking sigh,
Like a wild and hissing serpent quelled by incantations high!
Sobs convulsive shook his bosom and his speech and accent failed,
And a dark and deathlike faintness o'er his feeble soul prevailed,
Stunned awhile remained the monarch, then in furious passion woke,
And his eyeballs flamed with redfire, to the queen as thus he spoke:
"Traitress to thy king and husband, fell destroyer of thy race,
Wherefore seeks thy ruthless rancour Rama rich in righteous grace,
Traitress to thy kith and kindred, Rama loves thee as thy own,
Wherefore then with causeless vengeance as a mother hate thy son?
Have I courted thee, Kaikeyi, throned thee in my heart of truth,
Nursed thee in my home and bosom like a snake of poisoned tooth,
Have I courted thee, Kaikeyi, placed thee on Ayodhya's throne,
That my Rama, loved of people, thou shouldst banish from his own?
Banish far my Queen Kausalya, Queen Sumitra saintly wife,
Wrench from me my ancient empire, from my bosom wrench my life,
But with brave and princely Rama never can his father part,
Till his ancient life is ended, cold and still his beating heart!
Sunless roll the world in darkness, rainless may the harvests thrive,
But from righteous Rama severed, never can his sire survive,
Feeble is thy aged husband, few and brief on earth his day,
Lend me, wife, a woman's kindness, as a consort be my stay!
Ask for other boon, Kaikeyi, aught my sea-girt empire yields,
Wealth or treasure, gem or jewel, castled town or smiling fields,
Ask for other gift, Kaikeyi, and thy wishes shall be given,
Stain me not with crime unholy in the eye of righteous Heaven!"

Coldly spake the Queen Kaikeyi: "If thy royal heart repent,
Break thy word and plighted promise, let thy royal faith be rent,
Ever known for truth and virtue, speak to peers and monarchs all,
When from near and distant regions they shall gather in thy hall,
Speak if so it please thee, monarch, of thy evil-destined wife,
How she loved with wife's devotion, how she served and saved thy life,
How on plighted promise trusting for a humble boon she sighed,
How a monarch broke his promise, how a cheated woman died!"
"Fair thy form," resumed the monarch, "beauty dwells upon thy face,
Woman's winsome charms bedeck thee, and a woman's peerless grace,
Wherefore then within thy bosom wakes this thought of cruel wile,
And what dark and loathsome spirit stains thy heart with blackest guile?
Ever since the day, Kaikeyi, when a gentle bride you came,
By a wife's unfailing duty you have won a woman's fame,
Wherefore now this cruel purpose hath a stainless heart defiled,
Ruthless wish to send my Rama to the dark and pathless wild?
Wherefore, darkly-scheming woman, on unrighteous purpose bent,
Doth thy cruel causeless vengeance on my Rama seek a vent,
Wherefore seek by deeds unholy for thy son the throne to win,
Throne which Bharat doth not covet,—blackened by his mother's sin?
Shall I see my banished Rama mantled in the garb of woe,
Reft of home and kin and empire to the pathless jungle go,
Shall I see disasters sweeping o'er my empire dark and deep,
As the forces of a foeman o'er a scattered army sweep?
Shall I hear assembled monarchs in their whispered voices say,
Weak and foolish in his dotage, Dasa-ratha holds his sway,
Shall I say to righteous elders when they blame my action done,
That by woman's mandate driven I have banished thus my son?
Queen Kausalya, dear-loved woman! she who serves me as a slave,
Soothes me like a tender sister, helps me like a consort brave,
As a fond and loving mother tends me with a watchful care,
As a daughter ever duteous doth obeisance sweet and fair,
When my fond and fair Kausalya asks me of her banished son,
How shall Dasa-ratha answer for the impious action done,
How can husband, cold and cruel, break a wife's confiding heart,
How can father, false and faithless, from his best and eldest part?"
Coldly spake the Queen Kaikeyi: "If thy royal heart repent,
Break thy word and plighted promise, let thy royal faith be rent,

Truth-abiding is our monarch, so I heard the people say,
And his word is all inviolate, stainless virtue marks his sway,
Let it now be known to nations,—righteous Dasa-ratha lied,
And a trusting, cheated woman broke her loving heart and died!"
Darker grew the shades of midnight, coldly shone each distant star,
Wilder in the monarch's bosom raged the struggle and the war:
"Starry midnight, robed in shadows! give my wearied heart relief,
Spread thy sable covering mantle o'er an impious monarch's grief,
Spread thy vast and inky darkness o'er a deed of nameless crime,
Reign perennial o'er my sorrows heedless of the lapse of time,
May a sinful monarch perish ere the dawning of the day,
O'er a dark life sin-polluted, beam not morning's righteous ray!"

VII The Sentence

Morning came and duteous Rama to the palace bent his way,
For to make his salutation and his due obeisance pay,
And he saw his aged father shorn of kingly pomp and pride,
And he saw the Queen Kaikeyi sitting by her consort's side.
Duteously the righteous Rama touched the ancient monarch's feet,
Touched the feet of Queen Kaikeyi with a son's obeisance meet,
"Rama!" cried the feeble monarch, but the tear bedimmed his eye,
Sorrow choked his failing utterance and his bosom heaved a sigh,
Rama started in his terror at his father's grief or wrath,
Like a traveller in the jungle crossed by serpent in his path!
Reft of sense appeared the monarch, crushed beneath a load of pain,
Heaving oft a sigh of sorrow as his heart would break in twain,
Like the ocean tempest-shaken, like the sun in eclipse pale,
Like a crushed repenting *rishi* when his truth and virtue fail!
Breathless mused the anxious Rama,—what foul action hath he done,
What strange anger fills his father, wherefore greets he not his son?
"Speak, my mother," uttered Rama, "what strange error on my part,
Unremembered sin or folly fills with grief my father's heart,
Gracious unto me is father with a father's boundless grace,
Wherefore clouds his altered visage, wherefore tears bedew his face?
Doth a piercing painful ailment rack his limbs with cruel smart,
Doth some secret silent anguish wring his torn and tortured heart,
Bharat lives with brave Satrughna in thy father's realms afar,
Hath some cloud of dark disaster crossed their bright auspicious star?

Duteously the royal consorts on the loving monarch wait,
Hath some woe or dire misfortune dimmed the lustre of their fate,
I would yield my life and fortune ere I wound my father's heart,
Hath my unknown crime or folly caused his ancient bosom smart?
Ever dear is Queen Kaikeyi to her consort and her king,
Hath some angry accent escaped thee thus his royal heart to wring,
Speak, my ever-loving mother, speak the truth, for thou must know,
What distress or deep disaster pains his heart and clouds his brow?"
Mother's love nor woman's pity moved the deep-determined queen,
As in cold and cruel accents thus she spake her purpose keen:
"Grief nor woe nor sudden ailment pains thy father loved of old,
But he fears to speak his purpose to his Rama true and bold,
And his loving accents falter some unloving wish to tell,
Till you give your princely promise, you will serve his mandate well!
Listen more, in bygone seasons,—Rama thou wert then unborn,—
I had saved thy royal father, he a gracious boon had sworn,
But his feeble heart repenting is by pride and passion stirred,
He would break his royal promise as a caitiff breaks his word,
Years have passed and now the monarch would his ancient word forego,
He would build a needless causeway when the waters ceased to flow!
Truth inspires each deed attempted and each word by monarchs spoke,
Not for thee, though loved and honoured, should a royal vow be broke,
If the true and righteous Rama binds him by his father's vow,
I will tell thee of the anguish which obscures his royal brow,
If thy feeble bosom falter and thy halting purpose fail,
Unredeemed is royal promise and unspoken is my tale!"
"Speak thy word," exclaimed the hero, "and my purpose shall not fail.
Rama serves his father's mandate and his bosom shall not quail,
Poisoned cup or death untimely,—what the cruel fates decree,—
To his king and to his father Rama yields obedience free,
Speak my father's royal promise, hold me by his promise tied,
Rama speaks and shall not falter, for his lips have never lied."
Cold and clear Kaikeyi's accents fell as falls the hunter's knife,
"Listen then to word of promise and redeem it with thy life,
Wounded erst by foes immortal, saved by Queen Kaikeyi's care,
Two great boons your father plighted and his royal words were fair,
I have sought their due fulfilment,—brightly shines my Bharat's star,
Bharat shall be Heir and Regent, Rama shall be banished far!

If thy father's royal mandate thou wouldst list and honour still,
Fourteen years in Dandak's forest live and wander at thy will,
Seven long years and seven, my Rama, thou shalt in the jungle dwell,
Bark of trees shall be thy raiment and thy home the hermit's cell,
Over fair Kosala's empire let my princely Bharat reign,
With his cars and steeds and tuskers, wealth and gold and arméd men!
Tender-hearted is the monarch, age and sorrow dim his eye,
And the anguish of a father checks his speech and purpose high,
For the love he bears thee, Rama, cruel vow he may not speak,
I have spoke his will and mandate, and thy true obedience seek."
Calmly Rama heard the mandate, grief nor anger touched his heart,
Calmly from his father's empire and his home prepared to part.

BOOK III DASA-RATHA-VIYOGA

(*The Death of the King*)

THE FIRST SIX DAYS of Rama's wanderings are narrated in this Book. Sita and the faithful Lakshman accompanied Rama in his exile, and the loyal people of Ayodhya followed their exiled prince as far as the banks of the Tamasa river, where they halted on the first night. Rama had to steal away at night to escape the citizens, and his wanderings during the following days give us beautiful glimpses of forest life in holy hermitages. Thirty centuries have passed since the age of the Kosalas and Videhas, but every step of the supposed journey of Rama is well known in India to this day, and is annually traversed by thousands of devoted pilgrims. The past is not dead and buried in India, it lives in the hearts of millions of faithful men and faithful women, and shall live for ever.

On the third day of their exile, Rama and his wife and brother crossed the Ganges; on the fourth day they came to the hermitage of Bharad-vaja, which stood where Allahabad now stands, on the confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna; on the fifth day they crossed the Jumna, the southern shores of which were then covered with woods; and on the sixth day they came to the hill of Chitrakuta, where they met the saint Valmiki, the reputed author of this Epic. "We have often looked," says a writer in *Calcutta Review,* vol. xxii, "on that green hill: it is the holiest spot of that sect of the Hindu faith who devote themselves to this incarnation of Vishnu. The whole neighbourhood is Rama's country. Every headland has some legend, every cavern is connected with his name,

some of the wild fruits are still called Sita-phal, being the reputed food of the exile. Thousands and thousands annually visit the spot, and round the hill is raised a footpath on which the devotee, with naked feet, treads full of pious awe."

Grief for the banished Rama pressed on the ancient heart of Dasaratha. The feeble old king pined away and died, remembering and recounting on his death-bed how in his youth he had caused sorrow and death to an old hermit by killing his son. Scarcely any passage in the Epic is more touching than this old sad story told by the dying monarch.

The portions translated in this Book form the whole or the main portions of Sections xxvi., xxvii., xxxi., xxxix., xl., xlvi., lii., liv., lv., lvi., lxiii., and lxiv. of Book ii. of the original text.

I Woman's Love

"Dearly loved, devoted Sita! daughter of a royal line,
Part we now, for years of wand'ring in the pathless woods is mine,
For my father, promise-fettered, to Kaikeyi yields the sway,
And she wills her son anointed,—fourteen years doth Rama stray,
But before I leave thee, Sita, in the wilderness to rove,
Yield me one more tender token of thy true and trustful love!
Serve my crownéd brother, Sita, as a faithful, duteous dame,
Tell him not of Rama's virtues, tell him not of Rama's claim,
Since my royal father willeth,—Bharat shall be regent-heir,
Serve him with a loyal duty, serve him with obeisance fair,
Since my royal father willeth,—years of banishment be mine,
Brave in sorrow and in suffering, woman's brightest fame be thine!
Keep thy fasts and vigils, Sita, while thy Rama is away,
Faith in Gods and faith in virtue on thy bosom hold their sway,
In the early watch of morning to the Gods for blessings pray,
To my father Dasa-ratha honour and obeisance pay,
To my mother, Queen Kausalya, is thy dearest tendance due,
Offer her thy consolation, be a daughter fond and true!
Queen Kaikeyi and Sumitra equal love and honour claim,
With a soothing soft endearment sweetly serve each royal dame,
Cherish Bharat and Satrughna with a sister's watchful love,
And a mother's true affection and a mother's kindness prove!
Listen, Sita, unto Bharat speak no heedless angry word,
He is monarch of Kosala and of Raghu's race is lord,

Crownéd kings our willing service and our faithful duty own,
Dearest sons they disinherit, cherish strangers near the throne!
Bharat's will with deep devotion and with faultless faith obey,
Truth and virtue on thy bosom ever hold their gentle sway,
And to please each dear relation, gentle Sita, be it thine,
Part we love! for years of wand'ring in the pathless woods is mine!"
Rama spake, and soft-eyed Sita, ever sweet in speech and word,
Stirred by loving woman's passion boldly answered thus her lord:
"Do I hear my husband rightly, are these words my Rama spake,
And her banished lord and husband will the wedded wife forsake?
Lightly I dismiss the counsel which my lord hath lightly said,
For it ill beseems a warrior and my husband's princely grade!
For the faithful woman follows where her wedded lord may lead,
In the banishment of Rama, Sita's exile is decreed,
Sire nor son nor loving brother rules the wedded woman's state,
With her lord she falls or rises, with her consort courts her fate,
If the righteous son of Raghu wends to forests dark and drear,
Sita steps before her husband wild and thorny paths to clear!
Like the tasted refuse water cast thy timid thoughts aside,
Take me to the pathless jungle, bid me by my lord abide,
Car and steed and gilded palace, vain are these to woman's life,
Dearer is her husband's shadow to the loved and loving wife!
For my mother often taught me and my father often spake,
That her home the wedded woman doth beside her husband make,
As the shadow to the substance, to her lord is faithful wife,
And she parts not from her consort till she parts with fleeting life!
Therefore bid me seek the jungle and in pathless forests roam,
Where the wild deer freely ranges and the tiger makes his home,
Happier than in father's mansions in the woods will Sita rove,
Waste no thought on home or kindred, nestling in her husband's love!
World-renowned is Rama's valour, fearless by her Rama's side,
Sita will still live and wander with a faithful woman's pride,
And the wild fruit she will gather from the fresh and fragrant wood,
And the food by Rama tasted shall be Sita's cherished food!
Bid me seek the sylvan greenwoods, wooded hills and plateaus high,
Limpid rills and crystal *nullas*[1] as they softly ripple by,
And where in the lake of lotus tuneful ducks their plumage lave,
Let me with my loving Rama skim the cool translucent wave!

[1] Rivulets.

Years will pass in happy union,—happiest lot to woman given,—
Sita seeks not throne or empire, nor the brighter joys of heaven,
Heaven conceals not brighter mansions in its sunny fields of pride,
Where without her lord and husband faithful Sita would reside!
Therefore let me seek the jungle where the jungle-rangers rove,
Dearer than the royal palace, where I share my husband's love,
And my heart in sweet communion shall my Rama's wishes share,
And my wifely toil shall lighten Rama's load of woe and care!"
Vainly gentle Rama pleaded dangers of the jungle life,
Vainly spake of toil and trial to a true and tender wife!

II Brother's Faithfulness

Tears bedewed the face of Lakshman as he heard what Sita said,
And he touched the feet of Rama and in gentle accents prayed:
"If my elder and his lady to the pathless forests wend,
Armed with bow and ample quiver Lakshman will on them attend,
Where the wild deer range the forest and the lordly tuskers roam,
And the bird of gorgeous plumage nestles in its jungle home,
Dearer far to me those woodlands where my elder Rama dwells,
Than the homes of bright Immortals where perennial bliss prevails!
Grant me then thy sweet permission,—faithful to thy glorious star,
Lakshman shall not wait and tarry when his Rama wanders far,
Grant me then thy loving mandate,—Lakshman hath no wish to stay,
None shall bar the faithful younger when the elder leads the way!"
"Ever true to deeds of virtue, duteous brother, faithful friend,
Dearer than his life to Rama, thou shall not to forests wend,
Who shall stay by Queen Kausalya, Lakshman, if we both depart,
Who shall stay by Queen Sumitra, she who nursed thee on her heart?
For the king our aged father, he who ruled the earth and main,
Is a captive to Kaikeyi, fettered by her silken chain,
Little help Kaikeyi renders to our mothers in her pride,
Little help can Bharat offer, standing by his mother's side.
Thou alone can'st serve Kausalya when for distant woods I part,
When the memory of my exile rankles in her sorrowing heart,
Thou alone can'st serve Sumitra, soothe her sorrows with thy love,
Stay by them, my faithful Lakshman, and thy filial virtues prove,
Be this then they sacred duty, tend our mothers in their woe,
Little joy or consolation have thev left on earth below!"

Spake the hero: "Fear no evil, well is Rama's prowess known,
And to mighty Rama's mother Bharat will obeisance own,
Nathless if the pride of empire sways him from the righteous path,
Blood will venge the offered insult and will quench our filial wrath!
But a thousand peopled hamlets Queen Kausalya's hests obey,
And a thousand armèd champions own her high and queenly sway,
Aye, a thousand village-centres Queen Sumitra's state maintain,
And a thousand swords like Lakshman's guard her proud and prosperous reign!
All alone with gentle Sita thou shalt track thy darksome way,
Grant it, that thy faithful Lakshman shall protect her night and day,
Grant it, with his bow and quiver Lakshman shall the forests roam,
And his axe shall fell the jungle, and his hands shall rear the home!
Grant it, in the deepest woodlands he shall seek the forest fruit,
Berries dear to holy hermits and the sweet and luscious root,
And when with thy meek-eyed Sita thou shalt seek the mountain crest,
Grant it, Lakshman ever duteous watch and guard thy nightly rest!"
Words of brother's deep dèvotion Rama heard with grateful heart,
And with Sita and with Lakshman for the woods prepared to part:
"Part we then from loving kinsmen, arms and mighty weapons bring,
Bows of war which Lord VARUNA rendered to Videha's king,
Coats of mail to sword impervious, quivers which can never fail,
And the rapiers bright as sunshine, golden-hilted, tempered well,
Safely rest these goodly weapons in our great preceptor's hall,
Seek and bring them, faithful brother, for me thinks we need them all!"
Rama spake; his valiant brother then the wondrous weapons brought,
Wreathed with fresh and fragrant garlands and with gold and jewels wrought,
"Welcome, brother," uttered Rama, "stronger thus to woods we go,
Wealth and gold and useless treasure to the holy priests bestow,
To the son of saint Vasishtha, to each sage is honour due,
Then we leave our father's mansions, to our father's mandate true!"

III Mother's Blessings

Tears of sorrow and of suffering flowed from Queen Kausalya's eye,
As she saw departing Sita for her blessings drawing nigh,
And she clasped the gentle Sita and she kissed her moistened head,
And her tears like summer tempest choked the loving words she said:

"Part we, dear devoted daughter, to thy husband ever true,
With a woman's whole affection render love to husband's due!
False are women loved and cherished, gentle in their speech and word,
When misfortune's shadows gather, who are faithless to their lord,
Who through years of sunny splendour smile and pass the livelong day,
When misfortune's darkness thickens, from their husband turn away,
Who with changeful fortune changing oft ignore the plighted word,
And forget a woman's duty, woman's faith to wedded lord,
Who to holy love inconstant from their wedded consort part,
Manly deed nor manly virtue wins the changeful woman's heart!
But the true and righteous woman, loving spouse and changeless wife,
Faithful to her lord and consort holds him dearer than her life,
Ever true and righteous Sita, follow still my godlike son,
Like a God to thee is Rama in the woods or on the throne!"
"I shall do my duty, mother," said the wife with wifely pride,
"Like a God to me is Rama, Sita shall not leave his side,
From the Moon will part his lustre ere I part from wedded lord,
Ere from faithful wife's devotion falter in my deed or word,
For the stringless lute is silent, idle is the wheel-less car,
And no wife the loveless consort, inauspicious is her star!
Small the measure of affection which the sire and brother prove,
Measureless to wedded woman is her lord and husband's love,
True to Law and true to Scriptures, true to woman's plighted word,
Can I ever be, my mother, faithless, loveless to my lord?"
Tears of joy and mingled sorrow filled the Queen Kausalya's eye,
As she marked the faithful Sita true in heart, in virtue high,
And she wept the tears of sadness when with sweet obeisance due,
Spake with hands in meekness folded Rama ever good and true:
"Sorrow not, my loving mother, trust in virtue's changeless beam,
Swift will fly the years of exile like a brief and transient dream,
Girt by faithful friends and forces, blest by righteous Gods above,
Thou shalt see thy son returning to thy bosom and thy love!"
Unto all the royal ladies Rama his obeisance paid,
For his failings unremembered, blessings and forgiveness prayed,
And his words were soft and gentle, and they wept to see him go,
Like the piercing cry of curlew rose the piercing voice of woe,
And in halls where drum and tabor rose in joy and regal pride,
Voice of grief and lamentation sounded far and sounded wide!

Then the true and faithful Lakshman parted from each weeping dame,
And to sorrowing Queen Sumitra with his due obeisance came,
And he bowed to Queen Sumitra and his mother kissed his head,
Stilled her anguish-laden bosom and in trembling accents said:
"Dear devoted duteous Lakshman, ever to thy elder true,
When thy elder wends to forest, forest-life to thee is due,
Thou hast served him true and faithful in his glory and his fame,
This is Law for true and righteous,—serve him in his woe and shame,
This is Law for race of Raghu known on earth for holy might,
Bounteous in their sacred duty, brave and warlike in the fight!
Therefore tend him as thy father, as thy mother tend his wife,
And to thee, like fair Ayodhya be thy humble forest life,
Go, my son, the voice of Duty bids my gallant Lakshman go,
Serve thy elder with devotion and with valour meet thy foe!

IV Citizens' Lament

Spake Sumantra chariot-driver waiting by the royal car,
"Haste thee, mighty-destined Rama, for we wander long and far,
Fourteen years in Dandak's forest shall the righteous Rama stray,
Such is Dasa-ratha's mandate, haste thee Rama and obey."
Queenly Sita bright-apparelled, with a strong and trusting heart,
Mounted on the car of splendour for the pathless woods to part,
And the king for needs providing gave her robes and precious store,
For the many years of exile in a far and unknown shore,
And a wealth of warlike weapons to the exiled princes gave,
Bow and dart and linkéd armour, sword and shield and lances brave.
Then the gallant brothers mounted on the gold-emblazoned car,
For unending was the journey and the wilderness was far,
Skilled Sumantra saw them seated, urged the swiftly-flying steed,
Faster than the speed of tempest was the noble coursers' speed.
And they parted for the forest; like a long unending night,
Gloomy shades of grief and sadness deepened on the city's might,
Mute and dumb but conscious creatures felt the woe the city bore,
Horses neighed and shook their bright bells, elephants returned a roar!
Man and boy and maid and matron followed Rama with their eye,
As the thirsty seek the water when the parchéd fields are dry,
Clinging to the rapid chariot, by its side, before, behind,
Thronging men and wailing women wept for Rama good and kind:

"Draw the reins, benign Sumantra, slowly drive the royal car,
We would once more see our Rama, banished long and banished far,
Iron-hearted is Kausalya from her Rama thus to part,
Rends it not her mother's bosom thus to see her son depart?
True is righteous-hearted Sita cleaving to her husband still,
As the ever present sunlight cleaves to Meru's golden hill,
Faithful and heroic Lakshman! thou hast by thy brother stood,
And in duty still unchanging thou hast sought the pathless wood,
Fixed in purpose, true in valour, mighty boon to thee is given,
And the narrow path thou choosest is the righteous path to heaven!"
Thus they spake in tears and anguish as they followed him apace,
And their eyes were fixed on Rama, pride of Raghu's royal race,
Meanwhile ancient Dasa-ratha from his palace chamber came,
With each weeping queen and consort, with each woe-distracted dame!
And around the aged monarch rose the piercing voice of pain,
Like the wail of forest creatures when the forest-king is slain,
And the faint and feeble monarch was with age and anguish pale,
Like the darkened moon at eclipse when his light and radiance fail!
Rama saw his ancient father with a faltering footstep go,
Used to royal pomp and splendour, stricken now by age and woe,
Saw his mother faint and feeble to the speeding chariot hie,
As the mother-cow returneth to her young that loiters by,
Still she hastened to the chariot, "Rama! Rama!" was her cry,
And a throb was in her bosom and a tear was in her eye!
"Speed, Sumantra," uttered Rama, "from this torture let me part,
Speed, my friend, this sight of sadness breaks a much-enduring heart,
Heed not Dasa-ratha's mandate, stop not for the royal train,
Parting slow is lengthened sorrow like the sinner's lengthened pain!"
Sad Sumantra urged the coursers and the rapid chariot flew,
And the royal chiefs and courtiers round their fainting monarch drew,
And they spake to Dasa-ratha: "Follow not thy banished son,
He whom thou wouldst keep beside thee comes not till his task is done!"
Dasa-ratha, faint and feeble, listened to these words of pain,
Stood and saw his son departing,—saw him not on earth again!

V Crossing the Tamasa: The Citizens' Return

Evening's thickening shades descended on Tamasa's distant shore,
Rama rested by the river, day of toilsome journey o'er,

And Ayodhya's loving people by the limpid river lay,
Sad and sorrowing they had followed Rama's chariot through the day!
"Soft-eyed Sita, faithful Lakshman," thus the gentle Rama said,
"Hail the first night of our exile mantling us in welcome shade,
Weeps the lone and voiceless forest, and in darksome lair and nest,
Feathered bird and forest creature seek their midnight's wonted rest,
Weeps methinks our fair Ayodhya to her Rama ever dear,
And perchance her men and women shed for us a silent tear,
Loyal men and faithful women, they have loved their ancient king,
And his anguish and our exile will their gentle bosoms wring!
Most I sorrow for my father and my mother loved and lost,
Stricken by untimely anguish, by a cruel fortune crost,
But the good and righteous Bharat gently will my parents tend,
And with fond and filial duty tender consolation lend,
Well I know his stainless bosom and his virtues rare and high,
He will soothe our parents' sorrow and their trickling tear will dry!
Faithful Lakshman, thou hast nobly stood by us when sorrows fell,
Guard my Sita by thy valour, by thy virtues tend her well,
Wait on her while from this river Rama seeks his thirst to slake,
On this first night of his exile food nor fruit shall Rama take,
Thou Sumantra, tend the horses, darkness comes with close of day,
Weary was the endless journey, weary is our onward way!"
Store of grass and welcome fodder to the steeds the driver gave,
Gave them rest and gave them water from Tamasa's limpid wave,
And performing night's devotions, for the princes made their bed,
By the softly rippling river 'neath the tree's umbrageous shade.
On a bed of leaf and verdure Rama and his Sita slept,
Faithful Lakshman with Sumantra nightly watch and vigils kept,
And the stars their silent lustre on the weary exiles shed,
And on wood and rolling river night her darksome mantle spread.
Early woke the righteous Rama and to watchful Lakshman spake:
"Mark the slumb'ring city people, still their nightly rest they take,
They have left their homes and children, followed us with loyal heart,
They would take us to Ayodhya, from their princes loth to part!
Speed, my brother, for the people wake not till the morning's star,
Speed by night the silent chariot, we may travel fast and far,
So my true and loving people see us not by dawn of day,
Follow not through wood and jungle Rama in his onward way,

For a monarch meek in suffering should his burden bravely bear,
And his true and faithful people may not ask his woe to share!"
Lakshman heard the gentle mandate, and Sumantra yoked the steed,
Fresh with rest and grateful fodder, matchless in their wondrous speed,
Rama with his gentle consort and with Lakshman true and brave,
Crossed beneath the silent starlight dark Tamasa's limpid wave.
On the farther bank a pathway, fair to view and far and wide,
Stretching onwards to the forests spanned the spacious country-side,
"Leave the broad and open pathway," so the gentle Rama said,
"Follow yet a track diverging, so the people be misled.
Then returning to the pathway we shall march ere break of day,
So our true and faithful people shall not know our southward way."
Wise Sumantra hastened northward, then returning to the road,
By his master and his consort and the valiant Lakshman stood,
Raghu's sons and gentle Sita mounted on the stately car,
And Sumantra drove the coursers travelling fast and travelling far.
Morning dawned, the waking people by Tamasa's limpid wave,
Saw not Rama and his consort, saw not Lakshman young and brave,
And the tear suffused their faces and their hearts with anguish burned,
Sorrow-laden and lamenting to their cheerless homes returned.

VI Crossing the Ganges. Bharad-Vaja's Hermitage

Morning dawned, and far they wandered, by their people loved and lost,
Drove through grove and flowering woodland, rippling rill and river crost,
Crossed the sacred Vedasruti on their still unending way,
Crossed the deep and rapid Gumti where the herds of cattle stray,
All the toilsome day they travelled, evening fell o'er wood and lea,
And they came where sea-like Ganga rolls in regal majesty,
'Neath a tall Ingudi's shadow by the river's zephyrs blest,
Second night of Rama's exile passed in sleep and gentle rest.
Morning dawned, the royal chariot Rama would no further own,
Sent Sumantra and the coursers back to fair Ayodhya's town,
Doffing then their royal garments Rama and his brother bold
Coats of bark and matted tresses wore like anchorites of old.
Guha, chief of wild Nishadas, boat and needed succour gave,
And the princes and fair Sita ventured on the sacred wave.

And by royal Rama bidden strong Nishadas plied the oar,
And the strong boat quickly bounding left fair Ganga's northern shore.
"Goddess of the mighty Ganga!" so the pious Sita prayed,
"Exiled by his father's mandate, Rama seeks the forest shade,
Ganga! o'er the three worlds rolling, bride and empress of the sea,
And from BRAHMA's sphere descended! banished Sita bows to thee.
May my lord return in safety, and a thousand fattened kine,
Gold and gifts and gorgeous garments, pure libations shall be thine,
And with flesh and corn I worship unseen dwellers on thy shore,
May my lord return in safety, fourteen years of exile o'er!"
On the southern shore they journeyed through the long and weary day,
Still through grove and flowering woodland held their long and weary way,
And they slayed the deer of jungle and they spread their rich repast,
Third night of the princes' exile underneath a tree was past.
Morning dawned, the soft-eyed Sita wandered with the princes brave,
To the spot where ruddy Ganga mingles with dark Jumna's wave,
And they crost the shady woodland, verdant lawn and grassy mead,
Till the sun was in its zenith, Rama then to Lakshman said:
"Yonder mark the famed Prayaga, spot revered from age to age,
And the line of smoke ascending speaks some *rishi's* hermitage,
There the waves of ruddy Ganga with the dark blue Jumna meet,
And my ear the sea-like voices of the mingling waters greet.
Mark the monarchs of the forest severed by the hermit's might,
And the logs of wood and fuel for the sacrificial rite,
Mark the tall trees in their blossom and the peaceful shady grove,
There the sages make their dwelling, thither, Lakshman, let us rove."
Slowly came the exile-wand'rers, when the sun withdrew his rays,
Where the vast and sea-like rivers met in sisters' sweet embrace,
And the *asram's*[1] peaceful dwellers, bird of song and spotted deer,
Quaked to see the princely strangers in their warlike garb appear!
Rama stepped with valiant Lakshman, gentle Sita followed close,
Till behind the screening foliage hermits' peaceful dwellings rose,
And they came to Bharad-vaja, anchorite and holy saint,
Girt by true and faithful pupils on his sacred duty bent.
Famed for rites and lofty penance was the anchorite of yore,
Blest with more than mortal vision, deep in more than mortal lore,

[1] Hermitage.

And he sat beside the altar for the *agni-hotra*[1] rite,
Rama spake in humble accents to the man of holy might:
"We are sons of Dasa-ratha and to thee our homage bring,
With my wife, the saintly Sita, daughter of Videha's king,
Exiled by my royal father in the wilderness I roam,
And my wife and faithful brother make the pathless woods their home,
We would through these years of exile in some holy *asram* dwell,
And our food shall be the wild fruit and our drink from crystal well,
We would practise pious penance still on sacred rites intent,
Till our souls be filled with wisdom and our years of exile spent!"
Pleased the ancient Bharad-vaja heard the prince's humble tale,
And with kind and courteous welcome royal strangers greeted well,
And he brought the milk and *arghya* where the guests observant stood,
Crystal water from the fountain, berries from the darksome wood,
And a low and leafy cottage for their dwelling-place assigned,
As a host receives a stranger, welcomed them with offerings kind.
In the *asram's* peaceful courtyard fearless browsed the jungle deer,
All unharmed the bird of forest pecked the grain collected near,
And by holy men surrounded 'neath the trees' unbrageous shade,
In his pure and peaceful accents *rishi* Bharad-vaja said:
"Not unknown or unexpected, princely strangers, have ye come,
I have heard of sinless Rama's causeless banishment from home,
Welcome to a hermit's forest, be this spot your place of rest,
Where the meeting of the rivers makes our sacred *asram* blest,
Live amidst these peaceful woodlands, still on sacred rites intent
Till your souls be filled with wisdom and your years of exile spent!"
"Gracious are thy accents, *rishi,*" Rama answered thus the sage,
"But fair towns and peopled hamlets border on this hermitage,
And to see the banished Sita and to see us, much I fear,
Crowds of rustics oft will trespass on thy calm devotions here,
Far from towns and peopled hamlets, grant us, *rishi,* in thy grace,
Some wild spot where hid in jungle we may pass these years in peace."
"Twenty miles from this Prayaga," spake the *rishi* pond'ring well,
"Is a lonely hill and jungle where some ancient hermits dwell,
Chitra-kuta, Peak of Beauty, where the forest creatures stray,
And in every bush and thicket herds of lightsome monkeys play,
Men who view its towering summit are on lofty thoughts inclined,
Earthly pride nor earthly passions cloud their pure and peaceful mind,

[1] Sacrifice to the fire with offering of milk.

Hoary-headed ancient hermits, hundred autumns who have done,
By their faith and lofty penance heaven's eternal bliss have won,
Holy is the fair seclusion for thy purpose suited well,
Or if still thy heart inclineth, here in peace and comfort dwell!"
Spake the *rishi* Bharad-vaja, and with every courteous rite,
Cheered his guests with varied converse till the silent hours of night,
Fourth night of the princes' exile in Prayaga's hermitage,
Passed the brothers and fair Sita honoured by Prayaga's Sage.

VII Crossing the Jumna—Valmiki's Hermitage

Morning dawned, and faithful Sita with the brothers held her way,
Where the dark and eddying waters of the sacred Jumna stray,
Pondering by the rapid river long the thoughtful brothers stood,
Then with stalwart arms and axes felled the sturdy jungle wood,
Usira[1] of strongest fibre, slender bamboo smooth and plain,
Jambu[2] branches intertwining with the bent and twisting cane,
And a mighty raft constructed, and with creepers scented sweet,
Lakshman for the gentle Sita made a soft and pleasant seat.
Then the rustic bark was floated, framed with skill of woodman's craft,
By her loving lord supported Sita stepped upon the raft,
And her raiments and apparel Rama by his consort laid,
And the axes and the deerskins, bow and dart and shining blade,
Then with stalwart arms the brothers plied the bending bamboo oar,
And the strong raft gaily bounding left for Jumna's southern shore.
"Goddess of the glorious Jumna!" so the pious Sita prayed,
"Peaceful be my husband's exile in the forest's darksome shade,
May he safely reach Ayodhya, and a thousand fattened kine,
Hundred jars of sweet libation, mighty Jumna, shall be thine,
Grant that from the woods returning he may see his home again,
Grant that honoured by his kinsmen he may rule his loving men!"
On her breast her arms she folded while the princes plied the oar,
And the bright bark bravely bounding reached the wooded southern shore.
And the wanderers from Ayodhya on the river's margin stood,
Where the unknown realm extended mantled by unending wood,
Gallant Lakshman with his weapons went before the path to clear,
Soft-eyed Sita followed gently, Rama followed in the rear.

[1] A kind of hard wood. [2] Name of a tree.

Oft from tree and darksome jungle, Lakshman ever true and brave,
Plucked the fruit or smiling blossom and to gentle Sita gave,
Oft to Rama turned his consort, pleased and curious evermore,
Asked the name of tree or creeper, fruit or flower unseen before.
Still with brotherly affection Lakshman brought each dewy spray,
Bud or blossom of wild beauty from the woodland bright and gay,
Still with eager joy and pleasure Sita turned her eye once more,
Where the tuneful swans and *saras*[1] flocked on Jumna's sandy shore.
Two miles thus they walked and wandered and the belt of forest passed,
Slew the wild deer of the jungle, spread on leaves their rich repast,
Peacocks flew around them gaily, monkeys leaped on branches bent,
Fifth night of their endless wanderings in the forest thus they spent.
"Wake, my love, and list the warblings and the voices of the wood,"
Thus spake Rama when the morning on the eastern mountains stood,
Sita woke and gallant Lakshman, and they sipped the sacred wave,
To the hill of Chitra-kuta held their way serene and brave.
"Mark, my love," so Ramu uttered, "every bush and tree and flower,
Tinged by radiant light of morning sparkles in a golden shower,
Mark the flaming flower of *Kinsuk* and the *Vilwa* in its pride,
Luscious fruits in wild profusion ample store of food provide,
Mark the honeycombs suspended from each tall and stately tree,
How from every virgin blossom steals her store the faithless bee!
Oft the lone and startled wild cock sounds its clarion full and clear,
And from flowering fragrant forests peacocks send the answering cheer,
Oft the elephant of jungle ranges in this darksome wood,
For yon peak is Chitra-kuta loved by saints and hermits good,
Oft the chanted songs of hermits echo through its sacred grove,
Peaceful on its shady uplands, Sita, we shall live and rove!"
Gently thus the princes wandered through the fair and woodland scene,
Fruits and blossoms lit the branches, feathered songsters filled the green,
Anchorites and ancient hermits lived in every sylvan grove,
And a sweet and sacred stillness filled the woods with peace and love!
Gently thus the princes wandered to the holy hermitage,
Where in lofty contemplation lived the mighty Saint and Sagé,
Heaven inspired thy song, Valmiki! Ancient Bard of ancient day,
Deeds of virtue and of valour live in thy undying lay!
And the Bard received the princes with a father's greetings kind,
Bade them live in Chitra-kuta with a pure and peaceful mind,

[1] *Sarasa* the Indian crane.

To the true and faithful Lakshman, Rama then his purpose said,
And of leaf and forest timber Lakshman soon a cottage made.
"So our sacred *Sastras*[1] sanction," thus the righteous Rama spake,
"Holy offering we should render when our dwelling-home we make,
Slay the black buck, gallant Lakshman, and a sacrifice prepare,
For the moment is auspicious and the day is bright and fair."
Lakshman slew a mighty black-buck, with the antlered trophy came,
Placed the carcass consecrated by the altar's blazing flame,
Radiant round the mighty offering tongues of red fire curling shone,
And the buck was duly roasted and the tender meat was done.
Pure from bath, with sacred *mantra* Rama did the holy rite,
And invoked the bright Immortals for to bless the dwelling site,
To the kindly VISWA-DEVAS, and to RUDRA fierce and strong,
And to VISHNU Lord of Creatures, Rama raised the sacred song.
Righteous rite was duly rendered for the forest-dwelling made,
And with true and deep devotion was the sacred *mantra* prayed,
And the worship of the Bright Ones purified each earthly stain,
Pure-souled Rama raised the altar and the *chaitya's*[2] sacred fane.
Evening spread its holy stillness, bush and tree its magic felt,
As the Gods in BRAHMA's mansions, exiles in their cottage dwelt,
In the woods of Chitra-kuta where the Malyavati flows,
Sixth day of their weary wand'rings ended in a sweet repose.

VIII Tale of the Hermit's Son

Wise Sumantra chariot-driver came from Ganga's sacred wave,
And unto Ayodhya's monarch, banished Rama's message gave,
Dasa-ratha's heart was shadowed by the deepening shade of night,
As the darkness of the eclipse glooms the sun's meridian light!
On the sixth night,—when his Rama slept in Chitra-kuta's bower,—
Memory of an ancient sorrow flung on him its fatal power,
Of an ancient crime and anguish, unforgotten, dark and dread,
Through the lapse of years and seasons casting back its death-like shade!
And the gloom of midnight deepened, Dasa-ratha sinking fast,
To Kausalya sad and sorrowing spake his memories of the past:
"Deeds we do in life, Kausalya, be they bitter, be they sweet,
Bring their fruit and retribution, rich reward or suffering meet.

[1] Scriptures. [2] A shrine or temple.

Heedless child is he, Kausalya, in his fate who doth not scan
Retribution of his *karma*,[1] sequence of a mighty plan!
Oft in madness and in folly we destroy the mango grove,
Plant the gorgeous gay *palasa*[2] for the red flower that we love,
Fruitless as the red *palasa* is the *karma* I have sown,
And my barren lifetime withers through the deed which is my own!
Listen to my tale, Kausalya, in my days of youth renowned,
I was called a *sabda-bedhi*,[3] archer prince who shot by sound,
I could hit the unseen target, by the sound my aim could tell,—
Blindly drinks a child the poison, blindly in my pride I fell!
I was then my father's Regent, thou a maid to me unknown,
Hunting by the fair Sarayu in my car I drove alone,
Buffalo or jungle tusker might frequent the river's brink,
Nimble deer or watchful tiger stealing for his nightly drink,
Stalking with a hunter's patience, loitering in the forests drear,
Sound of something in the water struck my keen and listening ear,
In the dark I stood and listened, some wild beast the water drunk,
'Tis some elephant, I pondered, lifting water with its trunk.
I was called a *sabda-bedhi*, archer prince who shot by sound,
On the unseen fancied tusker dealt a sure and deadly wound,
Ah! too deadly was my arrow and like hissing cobra fell,
On my startled ear and bosom smote a voice of human wail,
Dying voice of lamentation rose upon the midnight high,
Till my weapons fell in tremor and a darkness dimmed my eye!
Hastening with a nameless terror soon I reached Sarayu's shore,
Saw a boy with hermit's tresses, and his pitcher lay before,
Weltering in a pool of red blood, lying on a gory bed,
Feebly raised his voice the hermit, and in dying accents said:
'What offence, O mighty monarch, all-unknowing have I done,
That with quick and kingly justice slayest thus a hermit's son?
Old and feeble are my parents, sightless by the will of fate,
Thirsty in their humble cottage for their duteous boy they wait,
And thy shaft that kills me, monarch, bids my ancient parents die,
Helpless, friendless, they will perish, in their anguish deep and high!
Sacred lore and lifelong penance change not mortal's earthly state,
Wherefore else they sit unconscious when their son is doomed by fate,

[1] A man's deeds with their consequences in this or future life.
[2] A tree bearing large, red blossoms with no scent.
[3] An archer who shoots by sound, not by sight of his object.

Or if conscious of my danger, could they dying breath recall,
Can the tall tree save the sapling doomed by woodman's axe to fall?
Hasten to my parents, monarch, soothe their sorrow and their ire,
For the tears of good and righteous wither like the forest fire,
Short the pathway to the *asram,* soon the cottage thou shalt see
Soothe their anger by entreaty, ask their grace and pardon free!
But before thou goest, monarch, take, O take thy torturing dart,
For it rankles in my bosom with a cruel burning smart,
And it eats into my young life as the river's rolling tide
By the rains of summer swollen eats into its yielding side.'
Writhing in his pain and anguish thus the wounded hermit cried,
And I drew the fatal arrow, and the holy hermit died!
Darkly fell the thickening shadows, stars their feeble radiance lent,
As I filled the hermit's pitcher, to his sightless parents went,
Darkly fell the moonless midnight, deeper gloom my bosom rent,
As with faint and falt'ring footsteps to the hermits slow I went.
Like two birds bereft of plumage, void of strength, deprived of flight,
Were the stricken ancient hermits, friendless, helpless, void of sight,
Lisping in their feeble accents still they whispered of their child,
Of the stainless boy whose red blood Dasa-ratha's hands defiled!
And the father heard my footsteps, spake in accents soft and kind:
'Come, my son, to waiting parents, wherefore dost thou stay behind,
Sporting in the rippling water didst thou midnight's hour beguile,
But thy faint and thirsting mother anxious waits for thee the while,
Hath my heedless word or utterance caused thy boyish bosom smart,
But a feeble father's failings may not wound thy filial heart,
Help of helpless, sight of sightless, and thy parents' life and joy,
Wherefore art thou mute and voiceless, speak, my brave and beauteous boy!'
Thus the sightless father welcomed cruel slayer of his son,
And an anguish tore my bosom for the action I had done,
Scarce upon the sonless parents could I lift my aching eye,
Scarce in faint and faltering accents to the father make reply,
For a tremor shook my person and my spirit sank in dread,
Straining all my utmost prowess, thus in quavering voice I said:
'Not thy son, O holy hermit, but a Kshatra warrior born,
Dasa-ratha stands before thee by a cruel anguish torn,
For I came to slay the tusker by Sarayu's wooded brink,
Buffalo or deer of jungle stealing for his midnight drink,

And I heard a distant gurgle, some wild beast the water drunk,—
So I thought,—some jungle tusker lifting water with its trunk,
And I sent my fatal arrow on the unknown, unseen prey,
Speeding to the spot I witnessed,—there a dying hermit lay!
From his pierced and quivering bosom then the cruel dart I drew,
And he sorrowed for his parents as his spirit heavenward flew,
Thus unconscious, holy father, I have slayed thy stainless son,
Speak my penance, or in mercy pardon deed unknowing done!'
Slow and sadly by their bidding to the fatal spot I led,
Long and loud bewailed the parents by the cold unconscious dead,
And with hymns and holy water they performed the funeral rite,
Then with tears that burnt and withered, spake the hermit in his might:
'Sorrow for a son beloved is a father's direst woe,
Sorrow for a son beloved, Dasa-ratha, thou shalt know!
See the parents weep and perish, grieving for a slaughtered son,
Thou shalt weep and thou shalt perish for a loved and righteous son!
Distant is the expiation,—but in fulness of the time,
Dasa-ratha's death in anguish cleanses Dasa-ratha's crime!'
Spake the old and sightless prophet; then he made the funeral pyre,
And the father and the mother perished in the lighted fire,
Years have gone and many seasons, and in fulness of the time,
Comes the fruit of pride and folly and the harvest of my crime!
Rama eldest born and dearest, Lakshman true and faithful son,
Ah! forgive a dying father and a cruel action done,
Queen Kaikeyi, thou hast heedless brought on Raghu's race this stain,
Banished are the guiltless children and thy lord and king is slain!
Lay thy hands on mine, Kausalya, wipe thy unavailing tear,
Speak a wife's consoling accents to a dying husband's ear,
Lay thy hands on mine, Sumitra, vision falls my closing eyes,
And for brave and banished Rama wings my spirit to the skies!
Hushed and silent passed the midnight, feebly still the monarch sighed,
Blessed Kausalya and Sumitra, blest his banished sons, and died.

BOOK IV RAMA-BHARATA-SAMBADA

(*The Meeting of the Princes*)

THE SCENE OF THIS BOOK is laid at Chitra-kuta. Bharat returning from the kingdom of the Kaikeyas heard of his father's death and his brother's

exile, and refused the throne which had been reserved for him. He wandered through the woods and jungle to Chitra-kuta, and implored Rama to return to Ayodhya and seat himself on the throne of his father. But Rama had given his word, and would not withdraw from it.

Few passages in the Epic are more impressive than Rama's wise and kindly advice to Bharat on the duties of a ruler, and his firm refusal to Bharat's passionate appeal to seat himself on the throne. Equally touching is the lament of Queen Kausalya when she meets Sita in the dress of an anchorite in the forest.

But one of the most curious passages in the whole Epic is the speech of Jabali the Sceptic, who denied heaven and a world hereafter. In ancient India as in ancient Greece there were different schools of philosophers, some of them orthodox and some of them extremely heterodox, and the greatest latitude of free thought was permitted. In Jabali, the poet depicts a free-thinker of the broadest type. He ridicules the ideas of Duty and of Future Life with a force of reasoning which a Greek sophist and philosopher could not have surpassed. But Rama answers with the fervour of a righteous, truth-loving, God-fearing man.

All persuasion was in vain, and Bharat returned to Ayodhya with Rama's sandals, and placed them on the throne, as an emblem of Rama's sovereignty during his voluntary exile. Rama himself then left Chitra-kuta and sought the deeper forests of Dandak, so that his friends and relations might not find him again during his exile. He visited the hermitage of the Saint Atri; and the ancient and venerable wife of Atri welcomed the young Sita, and robed her in rich raiments and jewels, on the eve of her departure for the unexplored wildernesses of the south.

The portions translated in this Book are the whole or the main portions of Sections xcix., c., ci., civ., cviii., cix., cxii., and cxix. of Book ii. of the original text.

I The Meeting of the Brothers

Sorrowing for his sire departed Bharat to Ayodhya came,
But the exile of his brother stung his noble heart to flame,
Scorning sin-polluted empire, travelling with each widowed queen,
Sought through wood and trackless jungle Chitra-kuta's peaceful scene.
Royal guards and Saint Vasishtha loitered with the dames behind,
Onward pressed the eager Bharat, Rama's hermit-home to find,

Nestled in a jungle thicket, Rama's cottage rose in sight,
Thatched with leaves and twining branches, reared by Lakshman's faithful might.
Faggots hewn of gnarléd branches, blossoms culled from bush and tree,
Coats of bark and russet garments, *kusa*[1] spread upon the lea,
Store of horns and branching antlers, fire-wood for the dewy night,—
Spake the dwelling of a hermit suited for a hermit's rite.
"May the scene," so Bharat uttered, "by the righteous *rishi* told,
Markalvati's rippling waters, Chitra-kuta's summit bold,
Mark the dark and trackless forest where the untamed tuskers roam,
And the deep and hollow caverns where the wild beasts make their home,
Mark the spacious wooded uplands, wreaths of smoke obscure the sky,
Hermits feed their flaming altars for their worship pure and high.
Done our weary work and wand'ring, righteous Rama here we meet,
Saint and king and honoured elder! Bharat bows unto his feet,
Born a king of many nations, he hath forest refuge sought,
Yielded throne and mighty kingdom for a hermit's humble cot,
Honour unto righteous Rama, unto Sita true and bold,
Theirs be fair Kosala's empire, crown and sceptre, wealth and gold!"
Stately *Sal*[2] and feathered palm-tree on the cottage lent their shade.
Strewn upon the sacred altar was the grass of *kusa* spread,
Gaily on the walls suspended hung two bows of ample height,
And their back with gold was pencilled, bright as INDRA's bow of might,
Cased in broad unfailing quivers arrows shone like light of day,
And like flame-tongued fiery serpents cast a dread and lurid ray,
Resting in their golden scabbards lay the sword of warriors bold,
And the targets broad and ample bossed with rings of yellow gold,
Glove and gauntlet decked the cottage safe from fear of hostile men,
As from creatures of the forest is the lion's lordly den!
Calm in silent contemplation by the altar's sacred fire,
Holy in his pious purpose though begirt by weapons dire,
Clad in deer-skin pure and peaceful, poring on the sacred flame,
In his bark and hermit's tresses like an anchorite of fame,
Lion-shouldered, mighty-arméd, but with gentle lotus eye,
Lord of wide earth ocean-girdled, but intent on penance high,
Godlike as the holy BRAHMA, on a skin of dappled deer
Rama sat with meek-eyed Sita, faithful Lakshman loitered near!

[1] Grass strewn around the altar at sacrifice. [2] *Sala*, a tall forest tree.

"Is this he whom joyous nations called to fair Ayodhya's throne,
Now the friend of forest-rangers wandering in the woods alone,
Is this he who robed in purple made Ayodhya's mansions bright,
Now in jungle bark and deer-skin clad as holy anchorite,
Is this he whose wreathéd ringlets fresh and holy fragrance shed,
Now a hermit's matted tresses cluster round his royal head,
Is this he whose royal *yajnas* filled the earth with righteous fame,
Now inured to hermit's labour by the altar's sacred flame,
Is this he whose brow and forehead royal gem and jewel graced,
Heir to proud Kosala's empire, eldest, noblest, and the best?"
Thus lamented pious Bharat, for his heart was anguish-rent,
As before the feet of Rama he in loving homage bent,
"Aryal" [1] in his choking accents this was all that Bharat said,
"Aryal" spake the young Satrughna and he bent his holy head!
Rama to his loving bosom raised his brothers from his feet,
Ah, too deep is love for utterance when divided brothers meet,
Faithful Guha, brave Sumantra, bowed to Rama's righteous feet,
And a joy and mingled sadness filled the hermit's calm retreat!

II Bharat's Entreaty and Rama's Reply

"Speak, my true, my faithful Bharat," so the righteous Rama cried,
"Wherefore to this jungle dwelling hast thou from Ayodhya hied,
Speak, my fond and loving brother, if our father bade thee come,
Leaving throne and spacious empire in this wilderness to roam?
Heir and Regent of Kosala! Dost thou tend our father well,
And obey the lofty mandate from his royal lips that fell,
And the ancient Dasa-ratha, glorious still in regal might,
Doth he pass his bright life's evening in each pure and holy rite?
Doth my mother, Queen Kausalya, still for Rama wet her eye,
And the gentle Queen Sumitra for her banished Lakshman sigh,
Doth the peerless Queen Kaikeyi pass her days in duties fair,
Guard her Bharat's mighty empire, tend him with a mother's care?
Is each holy rite and homage to the Gods and Fathers done,
Is the honour due to elders rendered by each duteous son,
Do thy warriors guard thy kingdom as of yore with matchless skill,
And with counsel deep and duteous do thy min'sters serve thy will?

[1] Honorable person, an Aryan.

Rich thy fields in corn and produce fed by rivers broad and deep,
Rich thy green unending pastures with the kine and fattened sheep,
Tend the herdsman and his cattle, tend the tiller of the soil,
Watch and help with all thy bounty workmen in their peaceful toil,
For the monarch's highest duty is to serve his people's weal
And the ruler's richest glory is to labour and to heal!
Guard thy forts with sleepless caution with the engines of the war,
With the men who shoot the arrow and who drive the flying car,
Guard Kosala's royal treasure, make thy gifts of wealth and food,
Not to lords and proud retainers, but to worthy and the good!
Render justice pure and spotless as befits thy royal line,
And to save the good and guiltless, Bharat, be it ever thine,
For the tears of suffering virtue wither like the thunder levin,
And they slay our men and cattle like the wrath of righteous heaven,
Fruitful be thy lore of Veda, fruitful be each pious rite,
Be thy queen a fruitful mother, be thy empire full of might!"
Weeping, weeping, Bharat answered Dasa-ratha's eldest son,
"Dasa-ratha walks the bright sky, for his earthly task is done!
For impelled by Queen Kaikeyi to the woods he bade thee go,
And his spotless fame was clouded and his bosom sank in woe,
And my mother, late repenting, weeps her deed of deepest shame,
Weeps her wedded lord departed, and a woman's tarnished fame!
Thou alone canst wipe this insult by a deed of kindness done,—
Rule o'er Dasa-ratha's empire, Dasa-ratha's eldest son,
Weeping queens and loyal subjects supplicate thy noble grace,—
Rule o'er Raghu's ancient empire, son of Raghu's royal race!
For our ancient Law ordaineth and thy Duty makes it plain,
Eldest-born succeeds his father as the king of earth and main,
By the fair Earth loved and welcomed, Rama, be her wedded lord,
As by planet-jewelled Midnight is the radiant Moon adored!
And thy father's ancient min'sters and thy courtiers faithful still,
Wait to do thy righteous mandate and to serve thy royal will,
As a pupil, as a brother, as a slave, I seek thy grace,—
Come and rule thy father's empire, king of Raghu's royal race!"
Weeping, on the feet of Rama, Bharat placed his lowly head,
Weeping for his sire departed, tears of sorrow Rama shed,
Then he raised his loving brother with an elder's deathless love,
Sorrow wakes our deepest kindness and our holiest feelings prove!

"But I may not," answered Rama, "seek Ayodhya's ancient throne,
For a righteous father's mandate duteous son may not disown,
And I may not, gentle brother, break the word of promise given,
To a king and to a father who is now a saint in heaven!
Not on thee, nor on thy mother, rests the censure or the blame,
Faithful to his father's wishes Rama to the forest came,
For the son and duteous consort serve the father and the lord,
Higher than an empire's glory is a father's spoken word!
All inviolate is his mandate,—on Ayodhya's jewelled throne,
Or in pathless woods and jungle Rama shall his duty own,
All inviolate is the blessing by a loving mother given,
For she blessed my life in exile like a pitying saint of heaven!
Thou shalt rule the kingdom, Bharat, guard our loving people well,
Clad in wild bark and in deer-skin I shall in the forests dwell,
So spake saintly Dasa-ratha in Ayodhya's palace hall,
And a righteous father's mandate duteous son may not recall!"

III Kausalya's Lament and Rama's Reply

Slow and sad with Saint Vasishtha, with each widowed royal dame,
Unto Rama's hermit-cottage ancient Queen Kausalya came,
And she saw him clad in wild bark like a hermit stern and high,
And an anguish smote her bosom and a tear bedewed her eye.
Rama bowed unto his mother and each elder's blessings sought,
Held their feet in salutation with a holy reverence fraught,
And the queens with loving fingers, with a mother's tender care,
Swept the dust of wood and jungle from his head and bosom fair,
Lakshman too in loving homage bent before each royal dame,
And they blessed the faithful hero spotless in his righteous fame.
Lastly came the soft-eyed Sita with obeisance soft and sweet,
And with hands in meekness folded bent her tresses to their feet,
Pain and anguish smote their bosoms, round their Sita as they prest,
As a mother clasps a daughter, clasped her in their loving breast!
Torn from royal hall and mansions, ranger of the darksome wood,
Reft of home and kith and kindred by her forest hut she stood!
"Hast thou, daughter of Videha," weeping thus Kausalya said,
"Dwelt in woods and leafy cottage and in pathless jungle strayed,
Hast thou, Rama's royal consort, lived a homeless anchorite,
Pale with rigid fast and penance, worn with toil of righteous rite?

But thy sweet face, gentle Sita, is like faded lotus dry,
And like lily parched by sunlight, lustreless thy beauteous eye,
Like the gold untimely tarnished is thy sorrow-shaded brow,
Like the moon by shadows darkened is thy form of beauty now!
And an anguish scathes my bosom like the withering forest fire,
Thus to see thee, duteous daughter, in misfortunes deep and dire,
Dark is wide Kosala's empire, dark is Raghu's royal house,
When in woods my Rama wanders and my Rama's royal spouse!"
Sweetly, gentle Sita answered, answered Rama fair and tall,
That a righteous father's mandate duteous son may not recall!

IV Jabali's Reasoning and Rama's Reply

Jabali a learned Brahman and a Sophist skilled in word,
Questioned Faith and Law and Duty, spake to young Ayodhya's lord:
"Wherefore, Rama, idle maxims cloud thy heart and warp thy mind,
Maxims which mislead the simple and the thoughtless human kind?
Love nor friendship doth a mortal to his kith or kindred own,
Entering on his wide earth friendless, and departing all alone,
Foolishly upon the father and the mother dotes the son,
Kinship is an idle fancy,—save thyself thy kith is none!
In the wayside inn he halteth who in distant lands doth roam,
Leaves it with the dawning daylight for another transient home,
Thus on earth are kin and kindred, home and country, wealth and store,
We but meet them on our journey, leave them as we pass before!
Wherefore for a father's mandate leave thy empire and thy throne,
Pass thy days in trackless jungle sacrificing all thy own,
Wherefore to Ayodhya's city, as to longing wife's embrace,
Speed'st thou not to rule thy empire, lord of Raghu's royal race?
Dasa-ratha claims no duty, and this will is empty word,
View him as a foreign monarch, of thy realm thou art the lord,
Dasa-ratha is departed, gone where all the mortals go,
For a dead man's idle mandate wherefore lead this life of woe?
Ah! I weep for erring mortals who on erring duty bent
Sacrifice their dear enjoyment till their barren life is spent,
Who to Gods and to the Fathers vainly still their offerings make,
Waste of food! for God nor Father doth our pious homage take!
And the food by one partaken, can it nourish other men,
Food bestowed upon a Brahman, can it serve our Fathers then?

Crafty priests have forged these maxims and with selfish objects say,
Make thy gifts and do thy penance, leave thy worldly wealth and pray!
There is no Hereafter, Rama, vain the hope and creed of men,
Seek the pleasures of the present, spurn illusions poor and vain,
Take the course of sense and wisdom, cast all idle faith aside,
Take the kingdom Bharat offers, rule Ayodhya in thy pride!"
"Fair thy purpose," answered Rama, "false thy reason leads astray,
Tortuous wisdom brings no profit, virtue shuns the crooked way,
For the deed proclaims the hero from the man of spacious lies,
Marks the true and upright *Arya* from the scheming worldly-wise!
If assuming virtue's mantle I should seek the sinful path,
Gods who judge our secret motives curse me with their deepest wrath,
And thy counsel helps not, *rishi,* mansions of the sky to win,
And a king his subjects follow adding deeper sin to sin!
Sweep aside thy crafty reasoning, Truth is still our ancient way,
Truth sustains the earth and nations and a monarch's righteous sway,
Mighty Gods and holy sages find in Truth their haven shore,
Scorning death and dark destruction, Truth survives for evermore!
Deadlier than the serpent's venom is the venom of a lie,
From the false, than from the cobra, men with deeper terror fly,
Dearer than the food to mortals, Truth as nourishment is given,
Truth sustains the wide creation, Truth upholds the highest heaven,
Vain were gifts and sacrifices, rigid penances were vain,
Profitless the holy *Vedas* but for Truth which they sustain,
Gifts and rites and rigid penance have no aim or purpose high,
Save in Truth which rules the wide earth and the regions of the sky!
I have plighted truth and promise and my word may not unsay,
Fourteen years in pathless forests father's mandate I obey,
And I seek no spacious reasons my relinquished throne to win,
Gods nor Fathers nor the *Vedas* counsel tortuous paths of sin!
Pardon, *rishi,* still unchanging shall remain my promise given
To my mother Queen Kaikeyi, to my father now in heaven,
Pardon, *rishi,* still in jungle we shall seek the forest fare,
Worship Gods who watch our actions, and pervade the earth and air!
Unto AGNI, unto VAYU, shall my constant prayers run,
I shall live like happy INDRA, hundred sacrifices done,
And the deep and darksome jungle shall be Rama's royal hall,
For a righteous father's mandate duteous son may not recall!"

V The Sandals

Tears nor sighs nor sad entreaty Rama's changeless purpose shook,
Till once more with hands conjoinéd Bharat to his elder spoke:
"Rama, true to royal mercy, true to duties of thy race,
Grant this favour to thy mother, to thy brother grant this grace,
Vain were my unaided efforts to protect our father's throne,
Town and hamlet, lord and tiller, turn to thee and thee alone!
Unto Rama, friends and kinsmen, chiefs and warriors, turn in pain,
And each city chief and elder, and each humble village swain,
Base thy empire strong, unshaken, on a loyal nation's will,
With thy worth and with thy valour serve thy faithful people still!"
Rama raised the prostrate Bharat to his ever-loving breast,
And in voice of tuneful *hansa*[1] thus his gentle speech addrest:
"Trust me, Bharat, lofty virtue, strength and will to thee belong,
Thou could'st rule a worldwide empire in thy faith and purpose strong,
And our father's ancient min'sters, ever faithful, wise and deep,
They shall help thee with their counsel and thy ancient frontiers keep.
List! the Moon may lose his lustre, Himalaya lose his snow,
Heaving Ocean pass his confines surging from the caves below,
But the truth-abiding Rama will not move from promise given,
He hath spoke and will not palter, help him righteous Gods in heaven!"
Blazing like the Sun in splendour, beauteous like the Lord of Night,
Rama vowed his Vow of Duty, changeless in his holy might!
"Humble token," answered Bharat, "still I seek from Rama's hand,
Token of his love and kindness, token of his high command,
From thy feet cast forth those sandals, they shall decorate the throne,
They shall nerve my heart to duty and shall safely guard thy own,
They shall to a loyal nation absent monarch's will proclaim,
Watch the frontiers of the empire and the people's homage claim!"
Rama gave the loosened sandals as his younger humbly prayed,
Bharat bowed to them in homage and his parting purpose said:
"Not alone will banished Rama barks and matted tresses wear,
Fourteen years the crowned Bharat will in hermit's dress appear,
Henceforth Bharat dwells in palace guised as hermit of the wood,
In the sumptuous hall of feasting wild fruit is his only food,
Fourteen years shall pass in waiting, weary toil and penance dire
Then, if Rama comes not living, Bharat dies upon the pyre!"

[1] Swan or goose.

VI The Hermitage of Atri

With the sandals of his elder Bharat to Ayodhya went,
Rama sought for deeper forests on his arduous duty bent,
Wandering with his wife and Lakshman slowly sought the hermitage,
Where resided saintly Atri, Vedic Bard and ancient sage.
Anasuya, wife of Atri, votaress of Gods above,
Welcomed Sita in her cottage, tended her with mother's love,
Gave her robe and holy garland, jewelled ring and chain of gold,
Heard the tale of love and sadness which the soft-eyed Sita told:
How the monarch of Videha held the plough and tilled the earth,
From the furrow made by ploughshare infant Sita sprang to birth,
How the monarch of Videha welcomed kings of worth and pride,
Rama 'midst the gathered monarchs broke the bow and won the bride,
How by Queen Kaikeyi's mandate Rama lost his father's throne,
Sita followed him in exile in the forest dark and lone!
Softly from the lips of Sita words of joy and sorrow fell,
And the pure-souled pious priestess wept to hear the tender tale,
And she kissed her on the forehead, held her on her ancient breast,
And in mother's tender accents thus her gentle thoughts exprest:
"Sweet the tale you tell me, Sita, of thy wedding and thy love,
Of the true and tender Rama, righteous as the Gods above,
And thy wifely deep devotion fills my heart with purpose high,
Stay with us my gentle daughter for the night shades gather nigh.
Hastening from each distant region feathered songsters seek their nest,
Twitter in the leafy thickets ere they seek their nightly rest,
Hastening from their pure ablutions with their pitcher smooth and fair,
In their dripping barks the hermits to their evening rites repair,
And in sacred *agni-hotra*[1] holy anchorites engage,
And a wreath of smoke ascending marks the altar of each sage.
Now a deeper shadow mantles bush and brake and trees around,
And a thick and inky darkness falls upon the distant ground,
Midnight prowlers of the jungle steal beneath the sable shade,
But the tame deer by the altar seeks his wonted nightly bed.
Mark! how by the stars encircled sails the radiant Lord of Night,
With his train of silver glory streaming o'er the azure height,
And thy consort waits thee, Sita, but before thou leavest, fair,
Let me deck thy brow and bosom with these jewels rich and rare,

[1] A sacrifice to the fire with daily offering of milk morning and evening.

Old these eyes and grey these tresses, but a thrill of joy is mine,
Thus to see thy youth and beauty in this gorgeous garment shine!"
Pleased at heart the ancient priestess clad her in apparel meet,
And the young wife glad and grateful bowed to Anasuya's feet,
Robed and jewelled, bright and beauteous, sweet-eyed Sita softly came,
Where with anxious heart awaited Rama prince of righteous fame.
With a wifely love and longing Sita met her hero bold,
Anasuya's love and kindness in her grateful accents told,
Rama and his brother listened of the grace by Sita gained,
Favours of the ancient priestess, pious blessings she had rained.
In the *rishi's* peaceful *asram* Rama passed the sacred night,
In the hushed and silent forest silvered by the moon's pale light,
Daylight dawned, to deeper forests Rama went serene and proud,
As the sun in midday splendour sinks within a bank of cloud!

BOOK V PANCHAVATI

(On the Banks of the Godavari)

THE wanderings of Rama in the Deccan, his meeting with Saint Agastya, and his residence on the banks of the Godavari river, are narrated in this Book. The reader has now left Northern India and crossed the Vindhya mountains; and the scene of the present and succeeding five Books is laid in the Deccan and Southern India. The name of Agastya is connected with the Deccan, and many are the legends told of this great Saint, before whom the Vindhya mountains bent in awe, and by whose might the Southern ocean was drained. It is likely that some religious teacher of that name first penetrated beyond the Vindhyas, and founded the first Aryan settlement in the Deccan, three thousand years ago. He was pioneer, discoverer and settler,—the Indian Columbus who opened out Southern India to Aryan colonization and Aryan religion.

Two *yojanas*[1] from Agastya's hermitage, Rama built his forest dwelling in the woods of Panchavati, near the sources of the Godavari river, and within a hundred miles from the modern city of Bombay. There he lived with his wife and brother in peace and piety, and the Book closes with the description of an Indian winter morning, when the brothers and Sita went for their ablutions to the Godavari, and thought of their

[1] A *yōjana* is about nine English miles.

distant home in Oudh. The description of the peaceful forest-life of the exiles comes in most appropriately on the eve of stirring events which immediately succeed, and which give a new turn to the story of the Epic. We now stand therefore at the turning point of the poet's narrative; he has sung of domestic incidents and of peaceful hermitages so far; he sings of dissensions and wars hereafter.

The portions translated in this Book form Sections i., xii., xiii., xv., and xvi. of Book iii. of the original text.

I The Hermitage of Agastya

Righteous Rama, soft-eyed Sita, and the gallant Lakshman stood
In the wilderness of Dandak,—trackless, pathless, boundless wood,
But within its gloomy gorges, dark and deep and known to few,
Humble homes of hermit sages rose before the princes' view.
Coats of bark and scattered *kusa* spake their peaceful pure abode,
Seat of pious rite and penance which with holy splendour glowed,
Forest songsters knew the *asram* and the wild deer cropt its blade,
And the sweet-voiced sylvan wood-nymph haunted oft its holy shade,
Brightly blazed the sacred altar, vase and ladle stood around,
Fruit and blossom, skin and faggot, sanctified the holy ground.
From the broad and bending branches ripening fruits in clusters hung,
And with gifts and rich libations hermits raised the ancient song,
Lotus and the virgin lily danced upon the rippling rill,
And the golden sunlight glittered on the greenwoods calm and still,
And the consecrated woodland by the holy hermits trod,
Shone like BRAHMA's sky in lustre, hallowed by the grace of God!
Rama loosened there his bow-string and the peaceful scene surveyed,
And the holy sages welcomed wanderers in the forest shade,
Rama bright as Lord of Midnight, Sita with her saintly face,
Lakshman young and true and valiant, decked with warrior's peerless grace!
Leafy hut the holy sages to the royal guests assigned,
Brought them fruit and forest blossoms, blessed them with their blessings kind,
"Raghu's son," thus spake the sages, "helper of each holy rite,
Portion of the royal INDRA, fount of justice and of might,
On thy throne or in the forest, king of nations, lord of men,
Grant us to thy kind protection in this hermit's lonely den!"

Homely fare and jungle produce were before the princes laid,
And the toil-worn, tender Sita slumbered in the *asram's* shade.
Thus from grove to grove they wandered, to each haunt of holy sage,
Sarabhanga's sacred dwelling and Sutikshna's hermitage,
Till they met the Saint Agastya, mightiest Saint of olden time,
Harbinger of holy culture in the wilds of Southern clime!
"Eldest born of Dasa-ratha, long and far hath Rama strayed,"—
Thus to pupil of Agastya young and gallant Lakshman said,—
"With his faithful consort Sita in these wilds he wanders still,
I am righteous Rama's younger, duteous to his royal will,
And we pass these years of exile to our father's mandate true,
Fain to mighty Saint Agastya we would render homage due!"
Listening to his words the hermit sought the shrine of Sacred Fire,
Spake the message of the princes to the Saint and ancient Sire:
"Righteous Rama, valiant Lakshman, saintly Sita seeks this shade,
And to see thee, radiant *rishi,* have in humble accents prayed."
"Hath he come," so spake Agastya, "Rama prince of Raghu's race,
Youth for whom this heart hath thirsted, youth endued with righteous grace,
Hath he come with wife and brother to accept our greetings kind,
Wherefore came ye for permission, wherefore linger they behind?"
Rama and the soft-eyed Sita were with gallant Lakshman led,
Where the dun deer free and fearless roamed within the holy shade,
Where the shrines of great Immortals stood in order thick and close,
And by bright and blazing altars chanted songs and hymns arose.
BRAHMA and the flaming AGNI, VISHNU lord of heavenly light,
INDRA and benign VIVASAT ruler of the azure height,
SOMA and the radiant BHAGA, and KUVERA lord of gold,
And VIDHATRI great Creator worshipped by the saints of old,
VAYU breath of living creatures, YAMA monarch of the dead,
And VARUNA with his fetters which the trembling sinners dread,
Holy Spirit of GAYATRI goddess of the morning prayer,
VASUS and the hooded NAGAS, golden-winged GARUDA fair,
KARITKEYA heavenly leader strong to conquer and to bless,
DHARMA god of human duty and of human righteousness,
Shrines of all these bright Immortals ruling in the skies above,
Filled the pure and peaceful forest with a calm and holy love!
Girt by hermits righteous-hearted then the Saint Agastya came,
Rich in wealth of pious penance, rich in learning and in fame,

Mighty-armèd Rama marked him radiant like the midday sun,
Bowed and rendered due obeisance with each act of homage done,
Valiant Lakshman tall and stately to the great Agastya bent,
With a woman's soft devotion Sita bowed unto the saint.
Saint Agastya raised the princes, greeted them in accents sweet,
Gave them fruit and herb and water, offered them the honoured seat,
With libations unto AGNI offered welcome to each guest,
Food and drink beseeming hermits on the wearied princes pressed.
"False the hermits," spake Agastya, "who to guests their dues deny,
Hunger they in life hereafter—like the speaker of a lie.
And a royal guest and wanderer doth our foremost honour claim,
Car-borne kings protect the wide earth by their prowess and their fame,
By these fruits and forest blossoms be our humble homage shewn,
By some gift, of Rama worthy, be Agastya's blessings known!
Take this bow, heroic Rama,—need for warlike arms is thine,—
Gems of more than earthly radiance on the goodly weapon shine,
Worshipper of righteous VISHNU! VISHNU's wondrous weapon take,
Heavenly artist VISWA-KARMAN shaped this bow of heavenly make!
Take this shining dart of BRAHMA radiant like a tongue of flame,
Sped by good and worthy archer never shall it miss its aim,
And this INDRA's sample quiver filled with arrows true and keen,
Filled with arrows still unfailing in the battle's dreadful scene!
Take this sabre golden-hilted in its case of burnished gold,
Not unworthy of a monarch and a warrior true and bold,
Impious foes of bright Immortals know these weapons dread and dire,
Mowing down the ranks of foemen, scathing like the forest fire!
Be these weapons thy companions,—Rama thou shall need them oft,—
Meet and conquer still thy foemen like the Thunder-God aloft!"

II The Counsel of Agastya

"Pleased am I," so spake Agastya, "in these forests dark and wild,
Thou hast come to seek me, Rama, with the saintly Janak's child,
But like pale and drooping blossoms severed from the parent tree,
Far from home in toil and trouble, faithful Sita follows thee,
True to wedded lord and husband she hath followed Raghu's son,
With a woman's deep devotion woman's duty she hath done!
How unlike the fickle woman, true while Fame and Fortune smile,
Faithless when misfortunes gather, loveless in her wicked wile,

How unlike the changeful woman, false as light the lightnings fling,
Keen as sabre, quick as tempest, swift as bird upon its wing!
Dead to Fortune's frown or favour, Sita still in truth abides,
As the star of Arundhati in her mansion still resides,
Rest thee with thy gentle consort, farther still she may not roam,
Holier were this hermit's forest as the saintly Sita's home!"
"Great Agastya!" answered Rama, "blesséd is my banished life,
For thy kindness to an exile and his friendless homeless wife,
But in wilder, gloomier forests lonesome we must wander still,
Where a deeper, darker shadow settles on the rock and rill."
"Be it so," Agastya answered, "two short *yojans* from this place,
Wild is Panchavati's forest where unseen the wild deer race,
Godavari's limped waters through its gloomy gorges flow,
Fruit and root and luscious berries on its silent margin grow,
Seek that spot and with thy brother build a lonesome leafy home,
Tend thy true and toil-worn Sita, farther still she may not roam!
Not unknown to me the mandate by thy royal father given,
Not unseen thy endless wanderings destined by the will of Heaven,
Therefore Panchavati's forest marked I for thy woodland stay,
Where the ripening wild fruit clusters and the wild bird trills his lay,
Tend thy dear devoted Sita and protect each pious rite,
Matchless in thy warlike weapons peerless in thy princely might!
Mark yon gloomy *Mahua* forest stretching o'er the boundless lea,
Pass that wood and turning northward seek an old *Nyagrodha* tree,
Then ascend a sloping upland by a steep and lofty hill,
Thou shalt enter Panchavati, blossom-covered, calm and still!"
Bowing to the great Agastya, Rama left the mighty sage,
Bowing to each saint and hermit, Lakshman left the hermitage,
And the princes tall and stately marched where Panchavati lay,
Soft-eyed Sita followed meekly where her Rama led the way!

III The Forest of Panchavati

Godavari's limpid waters in her gloomy gorges strayed,
Unseen rangers of the jungle nestled in the darksome shade!
"Mark the woodlands," uttered Rama, "by the Saint Agastya told,
Panchavati's lonesome forest with its blossoms red and gold,
Skilled to scan the wood and jungle, Lakshman, cast thy eye around,
For our humble home and dwelling seek a low and level ground,

Where the river laves its margin with a soft and gentle kiss,
Where my sweet and soft-eyed Sita may repose in sylvan bliss,
Where the lawn is fresh and verdant and the *kusa* young and bright,
And the creeper yields her blossoms for our sacrificial rite."
"Little can I help thee, brother," did the duteous Lakshman say,
"Thou art prompt to judge and fathom, Lakshman listens to obey!"
"Mark this spot," so answered Rama, leading Lakshman by the hand,
"Soft the lawn of verdant *kusa,* beauteous blossoms light the land,
Mark the smiling lake of lotus gleaming with a radiance fair,
Wafting fresh and gentle fragrance o'er the rich and laden air,
Mark each scented shrub and creeper bending o'er the lucid wave,
Where the bank with soft caresses Godavari's waters lave!
Tuneful ducks frequent this margin, *Chakravakas*[1] breathe of love,
And the timid deer of jungle browse within the shady grove,
And the valleys are resonant with the peacock's clarion cry,
And the trees with budding blossoms glitter on the mountains high,
And the rocks in well-marked strata in their glittering lines appear.
Like the streaks of white and crimson painted on our tuskers fair!
Stately *Sal* and feathered palm-tree guard this darksome forest-land,
Golden date and flowering mango stretch afar on either hand,
Asok thrives and blazing *Kinsuk, Chandan* wafts a fragrance rare,
Aswa-karna and *Khadira* by the *Sami* dark and fair,
Beauteous spot for hermit-dwelling joyous with the voice of song,
Haunted by the timid wild deer and by black buck fleet and strong!"
Foe-compelling faithful Lakshman heard the words his elder said,
And by sturdy toil and labour stately home and dwelling made,
Spacious was the leafy cottage walled with moistened earth and soft,
Pillared with the stately bamboo holding high the roof aloft,
Interlacing twigs and branches, corded from the ridge to eaves,
Held the thatch of reed and branches and of jungle grass and leaves,
And the floor was pressed and levelled and the toilsome task was done,
And the structure rose in beauty for the righteous Raghu's son!
To the river for ablutions Lakshman went of warlike fame,
With a store of fragrant lotus and of luscious berries came,
Sacrificing to the Bright Gods sacred hymns and *mantras* said,
Proudly then unto his elder shewed the home his hand had made.
In her soft and grateful accents gentle Sita praised his skill,
Praised a brother's loving labour, praised a hero's dauntless will,

[1] The male and female geese, as symbols of conjugal love.

Rama clasped his faithful Lakshman in a brother's fond embrace,
Spake in sweet and kindly accents with an elder's loving grace:
"How can Rama, homeless wand'rer, priceless love like thine requite,
Let him hold thee in his bosom, soul of love and arm of might,
And our father good and gracious, in a righteous son like thee,
Lives again and treads the bright earth, from the bonds of YAMA free!"
Thus spake Rama, and with Lakshman and with Sita child of love,
Dwelt in Panchavati's cottage as the Bright Gods dwell above!

IV Winter in Panchavati

Came and passed the golden autumn in the forest's gloomy shade,
And the northern blasts of winter swept along the silent glade,
When the chilly night was over, once at morn the prince of fame,
For his morning's pure ablutions to the Godavari came.
Meek-eyed Sita softly followed with the pitcher in her arms,
Gallant Lakshman spake to Rama of the Indian winter's charms:
"Comes the bright and bracing winter to the royal Rama dear,
Like a bride the beauteous season doth in richest robes appear,
Frosty air and freshening zephyrs wake to life each mart and plain,
And the corn in dewdrop sparkling makes a sea of waving green,
But the village maid and matron shun the freezing river's shore,
By the fire the village elder tells the stirring tale of yore!
With the winter's ample harvest men perform each pious rite,
To the Fathers long departed, to the Gods of holy might,
With the rite of *agrayana*[1] pious men their sins dispel,
And with gay and sweet observance songs of love the women tell,
And the monarchs bent on conquest mark the winter's cloudless glow,
Lead their bannered cars and forces 'gainst the rival and the foe!
Southward rolls the solar chariot, and the cold and widowed North
Reft of 'bridal mark' and joyance coldly sighs her sorrows forth,
Southward rolls the solar chariot, Himalaya, 'home of snow,'
True to name and appellation doth in whiter garments glow,
Southward rolls the solar chariot, cold and crisp the frosty air,
And the wood of flower dismantled doth in russet robes appear!
Star of Pushya rules December and the night with rime is hoar,
And beneath the starry welkin in the woods we sleep no more,

[1] The autumn harvest festival, with offerings of new grain.

And the pale moon mist-enshrouded sheds a faint and feeble beam,
As the breath obscures the mirror, winter mist obscures her gleam,
Hidden by the rising vapour faint she glistens on the dale,
Like our sun-embrownéd Sita with her toil and penance pale!
Sweeping blasts from western mountains through the gorges whistle by
And the *saras* and the curlew raise their shrill and piercing cry,
Boundless fields of wheat and barley are with dewdrops moist and wet,
And the golden rice of winter ripens like the clustering date,
Peopled marts and rural hamlets wake to life and cheerful toil,
And the peaceful happy nations prosper on their fertile soil!
Mark the sun in morning vapours—like the moon subdued and pale—
Brightening as the day advances piercing through the darksome veil,
Mark his gay and golden lustre sparkling o'er the dewy lea,
Mantling hill and field and forest, painting bush and leaf and tree,
Mark it glisten on the green grass, on each bright and bending blade,
Lighten up the long-drawn vista, shooting through the gloomy glade!
Thirst-impelled the lordly tusker still avoids the freezing drink,
Wild duck and the tuneful *hansa* doubtful watch the river's brink,
From the rivers wrapped in vapour unseen cries the wild curlew,
Unseen rolls the misty streamlet o'er its sandbank soaked in dew,
And the drooping water-lily bends her head beneath the frost,
Lost her fresh and fragrant beauty and her tender petals lost!
Now my errant fancy wanders to Ayodhya's distant town,
Where in hermit's barks and tresses Bharat wears the royal crown,
Scorning regal state and splendour, spurning pleasures loved of yore,
Spends his winter day in penance, sleeps at night upon the floor,
Aye! perchance Sarayu's waters seeks he now, serene and brave,
As we seek, when dawns the daylight, Godavari's limpid wave!
Rich of hue, with eye of lotus, truthful, faithful, strong of mind,
For the love he bears thee, Rama, spurns each joy of baser kind,
'False he proves unto his father who is led by mother's wile,'—
Vain this ancient impious adage—Bharat spurns his mother's guile,
Bharat's mother Queen Kaikeyi, Dasa-ratha's royal spouse,
Deep in craft, hath brought disaster on Ayodhya's royal house!"
"Speak not thus," so Rama answered, "on Kaikeyi cast no blame,
Honour still the righteous Bharat, honour still the royal dame,
Fixed in purpose and unchanging still in jungle wilds I roam,
But thy accents, gentle Lakshman, wake a longing for my home!

And my loving mem'ry lingers on each word from Bharat fell,
Sweeter than the draught of nectar, purer than the crystal well,
And my righteous purpose falters, shaken by a brother's love,
May we meet again our brother, if it please the Gods above!"
Waked by love, a silent tear-drop fell on Godavari's wave,
True once more to righteous purpose Rama's heart was calm and brave,
Rama plunged into the river 'neath the morning's crimson beam,
Sita softly sought the waters as the lily seeks the stream,
And they prayed to Gods and Fathers with each rite and duty done,
And they sang the ancient *mantra* to the red and rising Sun,
With her lord, in loosened tresses Sita to her cottage came,
As with RUDRA wanders UMA in Kailasa's hill of fame!

BOOK VI SITA-HARANA

(Sita Lost)

WE EXCHANGE the quiet life of Rama in holy hermitages for the more stirring incidents of the Epic in this Book. The love of a Raksha princess for Rama and for Lakshman is rejected with scorn, and smarting under insult and punishment she fires her brother Ravan, the king of Ceylon, with a thirst for vengeance. The dwellers of Ceylon are described in the Epic as monsters of various forms, and able to assume different shapes at will. Ravan sends Maricha in the shape of a beautiful deer to tempt away Rama and Lakshman from the cottage, and then finds his chance for stealing away the unprotected Sita.

The misfortunes of our lives, according to Indian thinkers, are but the results of our misdeeds; calamities are brought about by our sins. And thus we find in the Indian Epic, that a dark and foul suspicion against Lakshman crossed the stainless mind of Sita, and words of unmerited insult fell from her gentle lips, on the eve of the great calamity which clouded her life ever after. It was the only occasion on which the ideal woman of the Epic harboured an unjust thought or spoke an angry word; and it was followed by a tragic fate which few women on earth have suffered. To the millions of men and women in India, Sita remains to this day the ideal of female love and female devotion; her dark suspicions against Lakshman sprang out of an excess of her affection for her husband; and her tragic fate and long trial proved that undying love.

The portions translated in this Book form the whole or the main portions of Sections xvii., xviii., xliii., xlv., xlvi., xlvii., and xlix. of Book iii. of the original text.

I Surpa-nakha in Love

As the Moon with starry Chitra dwells in azure skies above,
In his lonesome leafy cottage Rama dwelt in Sita's love,
And with Lakshman strong and valiant, quick to labour and obey,
Tales of bygone times recounting Rama passed the livelong day.
And it so befell, a maiden, dweller of the darksome wood,
Led by wand'ring thought or fancy once before the cottage stood,
Surpa-nakha, Raksha maiden, sister of the Raksha lord,
Came and looked with eager longing till her soul was passion-stirred!
Looked on Rama lion-chested, mighty-arméd, lotus-eyed,
Stately as the jungle tusker, with his crown of tresses tied,
Looked on Rama lofty-fronted, with a royal visage graced,
Like KANDARPA young and lustrous, lotus-hued and lotus-faced!
What though she a Raksha maiden, poor in beauty plain in face,
Fell her glances passion-laden on the prince of peerless grace,
What though wild her eyes and tresses, and her accents counselled fear,
Soft-eyed Rama fired her bosom, and his sweet voice thrilled her ear,
What though bent on deeds unholy, holy Rama won her heart,
And, for love makes bold a female, thus did she her thoughts impart:
"Who be thou in hermit's vestments, in thy native beauty bright,
Friended by a youthful woman, arméd with thy bow of might,
Who be thou in these lone regions where the Rakshas hold their sway,
Wherefore in a lonely cottage in this darksome jungle stay?"
With his wonted truth and candour Rama spake sedate and bold,
And the story of his exile to the Raksha maiden told:
"Dasa-ratha of Ayodhya ruled with INDRA's godlike fame,
And his eldest, first-born Rama, by his mandate here I came,
Younger Lakshman strong and valiant doth with me these forests roam,
And my wife, Videha's daughter, Sita makes with me her home.
Duteous to my father's bidding, duteous to my mother's will,
Striving in the cause of virtue in the woods we wander still.
Tell me, female of the forest, who thou be and whence thy birth,
Much I fear thou art a Raksha wearing various forms on earth!"

"Listen," so spake Surpa-nakha, "if my purpose thou wouldst know,
I am Raksha, Surpa-nakha, wearing various shapes below,
Know my brothers, royal Ravan, Lanka's lord from days of old,
Kumbha-karna dread and dauntless, and Bibhishan true and bold,
Khara and the doughty Dushan with me in these forests stray,
But by Rama's love emboldened I have left them on the way!
Broad and boundless is my empire and I wander in my pride,
Thee I choose as lord and husband,—cast thy human wife aside,
Pale is Sita and misshapen, scarce a warrior's worthy wife,
To a nobler, lordlier female consecrate thy gallant life!
Human flesh is food of Rakshas! weakling Sita I will slay,
Slay that boy the stripling brother,—thee as husband I obey,
On the peaks of lofty mountains, in the forests dark and lone,
We shall range the boundless woodlands and the joys of dalliance prove!"

II Surpa-nakha Punished

Rama heard her impious purpose and a gentle smile repressed,
To the foul and forward female thus his mocking words addressed:
"List, O passion-smitten maiden! Sita is my honoured wife,
With a rival loved and cherished cruel were thy wedded life!
But no consort follows Lakshman, peerless is his comely face,
Dauntless is his warlike valour, matchless is his courtly grace,
And he leads no wife or consort to this darksome woodland grove,
With no rival to thy passion seek his ample-hearted love!"
Surpa-nakha passion-laden then on Lakshman turned her eye,
But in merry mocking accents smiling Lakshman made reply:
"Ruddy in thy youthful beauty like the lotus in her pride,
I am slave of royal Rama, wouldst thou be a vassal's bride?
Rather be his younger consort, banish Sita from his arms,
Spurning Sita's faded beauty let him seek thy fresher charms,
Spurning Sita's faded graces let him brighter pleasures prove,
Wearied with a woman's dalliance let him court a Raksha's love!"
Wrath of unrequited passion raged like madness in her breast,
Torn by anger strong as tempest thus her answer she addrest:
"Are these mocking accents uttered, Rama, to insult my flame,
Feasting on her faded beauty dost thou still revere thy dame?
But beware a Raksha's fury and an injured female's wrath,
Surpa-nakha slays thy consort, bears no rival in her path!"

Fawn-eyed Sita fell in terror as the Raksha rose to slay,
So beneath the flaming meteor sinks Rohini's softer ray,
And like Demon of Destruction furious Surpa-nakha came,
Rama rose to stop the slaughter and protect his helpless dame.
"Brother, we have acted wrongly, for with those of savage breed,
Word in jest is courting danger,—this the penance of our deed,
Death perchance or death-like stupor hovers o'er my lovéd dame,
Let me wake to life my Sita, chase this female void of shame!"
Lakshman's anger leaped like lightning as the female hovered near,
With his sword the wrathful warrior cleft her nose and either ear,
Surpa-nakha in her anguish raised her accents shrill and high,
And the rocks and wooded valleys answered back the dismal cry,
Khara and the doughty Dushan heard the far-resounding wail,
Saw her red disfigured visage, heard her sad and woeful tale!

III Rama's Departure

Vainly fought the vengeful Khara, doughty Dushan vainly bled,
Rama and the valiant Lakshman strewed the forest with the dead,
Till the humbled Surpa-nakha to her royal brother hied,
Spake her sorrows unto Ravan and Maricha true and tried.
Shape of deer unmatched in beauty now the deep Maricha wore,
Golden tints upon his haunches, sapphire on his antlers bore,
Till the woodland-wand'ring Sita marked the creature in his pride,
Golden was his neck of beauty, silver-white his flank and side!
"Come, my lord and gallant Lakshman," thus the raptur'd Sita spake,
"Mark the deer of wondrous radiance browsing by the forest brake!"
"Much my heart misgives me, sister," Lakshman hesitated still,
" 'Tis some deep deceitful Raksha wearing every shape at will,
Monarchs wand'ring in this forest, hunting in this lonely glen,
Oft waylaid by artful Rakshas are by deep devices slain,
Bright as day-god or *Gandharva,*[1] woodland scenes they love to stray,
Till they fall upon the heedless, quick to slaughter and to slay,
Trust me, not in jewelled lustre forest creatures haunt the green,
'Tis some *maya*[2] and illusion, trust not what thy eyes have seen!"
Vainly spake the watchful Lakshman in the arts of Rakshas skilled,
For with forceful fascination Sita's inmost heart was thrilled,

[1] A celestial musician.

[2] *Maya* is illusion.

"Husband, good and ever gracious," sweetly thus implored the wife,
"I would tend this thing of beauty,—sharer of my forest life!
I have witnessed in this jungle graceful creatures passing fair,
Chowri[1] and the gentle roebuck, antelope of beauty rare,
I have seen the lithesome monkey sporting in the branches' shade,
Grizzly bear that feeds on *Mahua,*[2] and the deer that crops the blade,
I have marked the stately wild bull dash into the deepest wood,
And the *Kinnar*[3] strange and wondrous as in sylvan wilds he stood,
But these eyes have never rested on a form so wondrous fair,
On a shape so full of beauty, decked with tints so rich and rare!
Bright his bosom gem-bespangled, soft the lustre of his eye,
Lighting up the gloomy jungle as the Moon lights up the sky,
And his gentle voice and glances and his graceful steps and light,
Fill my heart with eager longing and my soul with soft delight!
If alive that beauteous object thou canst capture in thy way,
As thy Sita's sweet companion in these woodlands he will stay,
And when done our days of exile, to Ayodhya will repair,
Dwell in Sita's palace chamber nursed by Sita's tender care,
And our royal brother Bharat oft will praise his strength and speed,
And the queens and royal mothers pause the gentle thing to feed!
If alive this wary creature be it, husband, hard to take,
Slay him and his skin of lustre cherish for thy Sita's sake,
I will as a golden carpet spread the skin upon the grass,
Sweet memento of this forest when our forest days will pass!
Pardon if an eager longing which befits a woman ill,
And an unknown fascination doth my inmost bosom fill,
As I mark his skin bespangled and his antlers' sapphire ray,
And his coat of starry radiance glowing in the light of day!"
Rama bade the faithful Lakshman with the gentle Sita stay,
Long through woods and gloomy gorges vainly held his cautious way,
Vainly set the snare in silence by the lake and in the dale,
'Scaping every trap, Maricha, pierced by Rama's arrows fell,
Imitating Rama's accents uttered forth his dying cry:
"Speed, my faithful brother Lakshman, helpless in the woods I die!"

[1] Properly *chamari,* the yak.
[2] Properly *madhuka,* a tree.
[3] A being with the body of a man, and face of a horse.

IV Lakshman's Departure

"Heardst that distant cry of danger?" questioned Sita in distress,
"Woe, to me! who in my frenzy sent my lord to wilderness,
Speed, brave Lakshman, help my Rama, doleful was his distant cry,
And my fainting bosom falters and a dimness clouds my eye!
To the dread and darksome forest with thy keenest arrows speed,
Help thy elder and thy monarch, sore his danger and his need,
For perchance the cruel Rakshas gather round his lonesome path,
As the mighty bull is slaughtered by the lions in their wrath!"
Spake the hero: "Fear not, Sita! Dwellers of the azure height,
Rakshas nor the jungle-rangers match the peerless Rama's might,
Rama knows no dread or danger, and his mandate still I own,
And I may not leave thee, Lady, in this cottage all alone!
Cast aside thy causeless terror; in the sky or earth below,
In the nether regions, Rama knows no peer or equal foe,
He shall slay the deer of jungle, he shall voice no dastard cry,
'Tis some trick of wily Rakshas in this forest dark and high!
Sita, thou hast heard my elder bid me in this cottage stay,
Lakshman may not leave thee, Lady, for this duty—to obey.
Ruthless Rakshas roam the forest to revenge their leader slain,
Various are their arts and accents; chase thy thought of causeless pain!"
Sparkled Sita's eye in anger, frenzy marked her speech and word,
For a woman's sense is clouded by the danger of her lord:
"Markest thou my Rama's danger with a cold and callous heart,
Courtest thou the death of elder in thy deep deceitful art,
In thy semblance of compassion dost thou hide a cruel craft,
As in friendly guise the foeman hides his death-compelling shaft,
Following like a faithful younger in this dread and lonesome land,
Seekest thou the death of elder to enforce his widow's hand?
False thy hope as foul thy purpose! Sita is a faithful wife,
Sita follows saintly Rama, true in death as true in life!"
Quivered Lakshman's frame in anguish and the tear stood in his eye,
Fixed in faith and pure in purpose, calm and bold he made reply:
"Unto me a Queen and Goddess,—as a mother to a son,—
Answer to thy heedless censure patient Lakshman speaketh none,
Daughter of Videha's monarch,—pardon if I do thee wrong,—
Fickle is the faith of woman, poison-dealing is her tongue!

And thy censure, trust me, Lady, scathes me like a burning dart,
Free from guile is Lakshman's purpose, free from sin is Lakshman's heart,
Witness ye my truth of purpose, unseen dwellers of the wood,
Witness, I for Sita's safety by my elder's mandate stood,
Duteous to my queen and elder, I have toiled and worked in vain,
Dark suspicion and dishonour cast on me a needless stain!
Lady! I obey thy mandate, to my elder now I go,
Guardian Spirits of the forest watch thee from each secret foe,
Omens dark and signs of danger meet my pained and aching sight,
May I see thee by thy Rama, guarded by his conquering might!"

V Ravan's Coming

Ravan watched the happy moment burning with a vengeful spite,
Came to sad and sorrowing Sita in the guise of anchorite,
Tufted hair and russet garment, sandals on his feet he wore,
And depending from his shoulders on a staff his vessel bore,
And he came to lonely Sita, for each warlike chief was gone,
As the darkness comes to evening lightless from the parted Sun,
And he cast his eyes on Sita, as a *graha*[1] casts its shade
On the beauteous star Rohini when the bright Moon's glories fade.
Quaking Nature knew the moment; silent stood the forest trees,
Conscious of a deed of darkness fell the fragrant forest breeze,
Godavari's troubled waters trembled 'neath his lurid glance,
And his red eye's fiery lustre sparkled in the wavelets' dance!
Mute and still were forest creatures when in guise of anchorite,
Unto Sita's lonely cottage pressed the Raksha in his might,
Mute and voiceless was the jungle as he cast on her his eye,
As across the star of Chitra, planet Sani walks the sky!
Ravan stood in hermit's vestments,—vengeful purpose unrevealed,—
As a deep and darksome cavern is by grass and leaf concealed,
Ravan stood sedate and silent, and he gazed on Rama's queen,
Ivory brow and lip of coral, sparkling teeth of pearly sheen!
Lighting up the lonely cottage, Sita sat in radiance high,
As the Moon with streaks of silver fills the lonely midnight sky,
Lighting up the gloomy woodlands with her eyes serenely fair,
With her bark-clad shape of beauty mantled by her raven hair!

[1] The power of darkness, supposed to seize the sun or the moon at eclipse.

Ravan fired by impure passion fixed on her in lustful eye,
And the light that lit his glances gave his holy texts the lie,
Ravan in his flattering accents, with a soft and soothing art,
Praised the woman's peerless beauty to subdue the woman's heart:
"Beaming in thy golden beauty, robed in sylvan russet dress,
Wearing wreath of fragrant lotus like a nymph of wilderness,
Art thou *Sri*[1] or radiant *Gauri*,[2] maid of Fortune or of Fame,
Nymph of Love or sweet Fruition, what may be thy sacred name?
On thy lips of ruddy coral teeth of tender jasmine shine,
In thy eyes of limpid lustre dwells a light of love divine,
Tall and slender, softly rounded, are thy limbs of beauty rare,
Like the swelling fruit of *tala*[3] heaves thy bosom sweetly fair!
Smiling lips that tempt and ravish, lustre that thy dark eyes beam,
Crush my heart, as rolling waters crush the margin of the stream.
And thy wealth of waving tresses mantles o'er thy budding charms,
And thy waist of slender beauty courts a lover's circling arms!
Goddess or Gandharva maiden wears no brighter form or face,
Woman seen by eyes of mortals owns not such transcendent grace,
Wherefore then, in lonesome forest, nymph or maiden, make thy stay,
Where the jungle creatures wander and the Rakshas hold their sway?
Royal halls and stately mansions were for thee a meeter home,
And thy steps should grace a palace, not in pathless forest roam,
Blossoms rich, not thorn of jungle, decorate a lady's bower,
Silken robes, not sylvan garments, heighten Beauty's potent power!
Lady of the sylvan forest! other destiny is thine,—
As a bride beloved and courted in thy bridal garments shine,
Choose a loved and lordly suitor who shall wait on thee in pride,
Choose a hero worth thy beauty, be a monarch's queenly bride!
Speak thy lineage, heaven-descended! who may be thy parents high,
Rudras or the radiant *Maruts, Vasus* leaders of the sky,
All unworthy is this forest for a nymph or heavenly maid,
Beasts of prey infest the jungle, Rakshas haunt its gloomy shade,
Lions dwell in lovely caverns, tuskers ford the silent lake,
Monkeys sport on pendant branches, tigers steal beneath the brake,
Wherefore then this dismal forest doth thy fairy face adorn,
Who are thou and whence descended, nymph or maid or goddess-born?"

[1] Goddess of beauty and wealth, wife of Vishnu.
[2] A goddess, wife of Siva.
[3] A species of palm-tree with round fruit.

VI Ravan's Wooing

"Listen, Brahman!" answered Sita,—unsuspecting in her mind
That she saw a base betrayer in a hermit seeming kind,—
"I am born of royal Janak, ruler of Videha's land,
Rama prince of proud Kosala by his valour won my hand.
Years we passed in peaceful pleasure in Ayodhya's happy clime,
Rich in every rare enjoyment gladsome passed our happy time,
Till the monarch Dasa-ratha,—for his days were almost done,—
Wished to crown the royal Rama as his Heir and Regent son.
But the scheming Queen Kaikeyi claimed a long-forgotten boon,
That my consort should be exiled and her son should fill the throne,
She would take no rest or slumber, nourishment of drink or food,
Till her Bharat ruled the empire, Rama banished to the wood!
Five and twenty righteous summers graced my good and gracious lord,
True to faith and true to duty, true in purpose, deed, and word,
Loved of all his loyal people, rich in valour and in fame,
For the rite of consecration Rama to his father came.
Spake Kaikeyi to my husband:—'List thy father's promise fair,
Bharat shall be ruling monarch, do thou to the woods repair,'—
Ever gentle, ever duteous, Rama listened to obey,
And through woods and pathless jungles we have held our lonely way.
This, O pious-hearted hermit, is his story of distress,
And his young and faithful brother follows him in wilderness,
Lion in his warlike valour, hermit in his saintly vow,
Lakshman with his honoured elder wanders through the forest now.
Rest thee here, O holy Brahman, rich in piety and fame,
Till the forest-ranging brothers greet thee with the forest game,
Speak, if so it please thee, father, what great *rishi* claims thy birth,
Wherefore in this pathless jungle wand'rest friendless on this earth."
"Brahman nor a righteous *rishi*," royal Ravan made reply,
"Leader of the wrathful Rakshas, Lanka's lord and king am I,
He whose valour quells the wide-world, Gods above and men below,
He whose proud and peerless prowess Rakshas and Asuras know!
But thy beauty's golden lustre, Sita, wins my royal heart,
Be a sharer of my empire, of my glory take a part,
Many queens of queenly beauty on the royal Ravan wait,
Thou shalt be their reigning empress, thou shalt own my regal state!

Lanka girt by boundless ocean is of royal towns the best,
Seated in her pride and glory on a mountain's towering crest,
And in mountain paths and woodlands thou shalt with thy Ravan stray,
Not in Godavari's gorges through the dark and dreary day,
And five thousand gay-dressed damsels shall upon my Sita wait,
Queen of Ravan's true affection, proud partaker of his state!"
Sparkled Sita's eyes in anger and a tremor shook her frame,
As in proud and scornful accents answered thus the royal dame:
"Knowest thou Rama great and godlike, peerless hero in the strife,
Deep, uncompassed, like the ocean?—I am Rama's wedded-wife!
Knowest thou Rama proud and princely, sinless in his saintly life,
Stately as the tall *Nyagrodha?*[1]—I am Rama's wedded wife!
Mighty-armèd, mighty-chested, mighty with his bow and sword,
Lion midst the sons of mortals,—Rama is my wedded lord!
Stainless as the Moon in glory, stainless in his deed and word,
Rich in valour and in virtue,—Rama is my wedded lord!
Sure thy fitful life is shadowed by a dark and dreadful fate,
Since in frenzy of thy passion courtest thou a warrior's mate,
Tear the tooth of hungry lion while upon the calf he feeds,
Touch the fang of deadly cobra while his dying victim bleeds,
Aye, uproot the solid mountain from its base of rocky land,
Ere thou win the wife of Rama stout of heart and strong of hand!
Pierce thy eye with point of needle till it racks thy tortured head,
Press thy red tongue cleft and bleeding on the razor's shining blade,
Hurl thyself upon the ocean from a towering peak and high,
Snatch the orbs of day and midnight from their spheres in azure sky,
Tongues of flaming conflagration in thy flowing dress enfold,
Ere thou take the wife of Rama to thy distant dungeon hold,
Ere thou seek to insult Rama unrelenting in his wrath,
O'er a bed of pikes of iron tread a softer easier path!"

VII Ravan's Triumph

Vain her threat and soft entreaty, Ravan held her in his wrath,
As the planet Budha captures fair Rohini in his path,
By his left hand tremor-shaken, Ravan held her streaming hair,
By his right the ruthless Raksha lifted up the fainting fair!

[1] The banyan or Indian fig-tree.

Unseen dwellers of the woodlands watched the dismal deed of shame,
Marked the mighty-arméd Raksha lift the poor and helpless dame,
Seat her on his car celestial yoked with asses winged with speed,
Golden in its shape and radiance, fleet as INDRA's heavenly steed!
Angry threat and sweet entreaty Ravan to her ears addressed,
As the struggling fainting woman still he held upon his breast,
Vain his threat and vain entreaty, "Rama! Rama!" still she cried,
To the dark and distant forest where her noble lord had hied.
Then arose the car celestial o'er the hill and wooded vale,
Like a snake in eagle's talons Sita writhed with piteous wail,
Dim and dizzy, faint and faltering, still she sent her piercing cry,
Echoing through the boundless woodlands, pealing to the upper sky:
"Save me, mighty-arméd Lakshman, stainless in thy heart and deed,
Save a faithful wife and woman from a Raksha's lust and greed,
True and faithful was thy warning,—false and foul the charge I made,
Pardon, friend, an erring sister, pardon words a woman said!
Help me, ever righteous Rama, duty bade thee yield thy throne,
Duty bids thee smite the sinful, save the wife who is thy own,
Thou art king and stern chastiser of each deed of sin and shame,
Hurl thy vengeance on the Raksha who insults thy faithful dame!
Deed of sin, unrighteous Ravan, brings in time its dreadful meed,
As the young corn grows and ripens from the small and living seed,
For this deed of insult, Ravan, in thy heedless folly done,
Death of all thy race and kindred thou shalt reap from Raghu's son!
Darksome woods of Panchavati, Janasthana's smiling vale,
Flowering trees and winding creepers, murmur to my lord this tale,
Sweet companions of my exile, friends who cheered my woodland stay,
Speak to Rama, that his Sita ruthless Ravan bears away!
Towering peaks and lofty mountains, wooded hills sublime and high,
Far-extending gloomy ranges heaving to the azure sky,
In your voice of pealing thunder to my lord and consort say,
Speak of Rama, that his Sita ruthless Ravan bears away!
Unseen dwellers of the woodlands, spirits of the rock and fell,
Sita renders you obeisance as she speaks her sad farewell,
Whisper to my righteous Rama when he seeks his homeward way,
Speak to Rama, that his Sita ruthless Ravan bears away!
Ah, my Rama, true and tender! thou hast loved me as thy life,
From the foul and impious Raksha thou shalt still redeem thy wife,

Ah, my Rama, mighty-arméd! vengeance soon shall speed thy way,
When thou hearest helpless Sita is by Ravan torn away!
And thou royal bird, Jatayu, witness Ravan's deed of shame,
Witness how he courts destruction, stealing Rama's faithful dame,
Rama and the gallant Lakshman soon shall find their destined prey,
When they know that trusting Sita is by Ravan torn away!"
Vainly wept the anguished Sita; vain Jatayu in his wrath,
Fought with beak and bloody talons to impede the Raksha's path,
Pierced and bleeding fell the vulture; Raven fled with Rama's bride,
Where amidst the boundless ocean Lanka rose in towering pride!

BOOK VII KISHKINDHA

(In the Nilgiri Mountains)

RAMA'S WANDERINGS in the Nilgiri mountains, and his alliance with Sugriva the chief of these regions, form the subject of the Book. With that contempt for aboriginal races which has marked civilized conquerors in all ages, the poet describes the dwellers of these regions as monkeys and bears. But the modern reader sees through these strange epithets; and in the description of the social and domestic manners, the arts and industries, the sacred rites and ceremonies, and the civic and political life of the Vanars, the reader will find that the poet even imports Aryan customs into his account of the dwellers of Southern India. They formed an alliance with Rama, they fought for him and triumphed with him, and they helped him to recover his wife from the king of Ceylon.

The portions translated in this Book from Sections v., xv., xvi., xxvi., a portion of Section xxviii., and an abstract of Sections xl. to xliii. of Book iv. of the original text.

I Friends in Misfortune

Long and loud lamented Rama by his lonesome cottage door,
Janasthana's woodlands answered, Panchavati's echoing shore,
Long he searched in wood and jungle, mountain crest and pathless plain,
Till he reached the Malya mountains stretching to the southern main.
There Sugriva king of Vanars, Hanuman his henchman brave,
Banished from their home and empire lived within the forest cave,

To the exiled king Sugriva, Hanuman his purpose told,
As he marked the pensive Rama wand'ring with his brother bold:
"Mark the sons of Dasa-ratha banished from their royal home,
Duteous to their father's mandate in these pathless forests roam,
Great was monarch Dasa-ratha famed for sacrifice divine,
Raja-suya,[1] *Aswa-medha,*[2] and for gift of gold and kine,
By a monarch's stainless duty people's love the monarch won,
By a woman's false contrivance banished he his eldest son!
True to duty, true to virtue, Rama passed his forest life,
Till a false perfidious Raksha stole his fair and faithful wife,
And the anguish-stricken husband seeks thy friendship and thy aid,
Mutual sorrow blends your fortunes, be ye friends in mutual need!"
Bold Sugriva heard the counsel, and to righteous Rama hied,
And the princess of Ayodhya with his greetings gratified:
"Well I know thee, righteous Rama, soul of piety and love,
And thy duty to thy father and thy faith in God above,
Fortune favours poor Sugriva, Rama courts his humble aid,
In our deepest direst danger be our truest friendship made!
Equal is our fateful fortune,—I have lost a queenly wife,
Banished from Kishkindha's empire here I lead a forest life,
Pledge of love and true alliance, Rama, take this proffered hand,
Banded by a common sorrow we shall fall or stoutly stand!"
Rama grasped the hand he offered, and the tear was in his eye,
And they swore undying friendship o'er the altar blazing high,
Hanuman with fragrant blossoms sanctified the sacred rite,
And the comrades linked by sorrow walked around the altar's light,
And their word and troth they plighted: "In our happiness and woe
We are friends in thought and action, we will face our common foe!"
And they broke a leafy *Sal* tree, spread it underneath their feet,
Rama and his friend Sugriva sat upon the common seat,
And a branch of scented *Chandan*[3] with its tender blossoms graced,
Hanuman as seat of honour for the faithful Lakshman placed.
"Listen, Rama," spake Sugriva, "reft of kingdom, reft of wife,
Fleeing to these rugged mountains I endure a forest life,
For my tyrant brother Bali rules Kishkindha all alone,
Forced my wife from my embraces, drove me from my father's throne,
Trembling in my fear and anguish I endure a life of woe,
Render me my wife and empire from my brother and my foe!"

[1] An imperial sacrifice. [2] Horse sacrifice. [3] Sandal tree.

"Not in vain they seek my succour," so the gallant Rama said,
"Who with love and offered friendship seek my counsel and my aid,
Not in vain these glistening arrows in my ample quiver shine,
Bali dies the death of tyrants, wife and empire shall be thine!
Quick as INDRA'S *forked lightning are these arrows feather-plumed,*
Deadly as the hissing serpent are these darts with points illumed,
And this day shall not be ended ere it sees thy brother fall,
As by lurid lightning severed sinks the crest of mountain tall!"

II The Counsel of Tara

Linked in bonds of faithful friendship Rama and Sugriva came,
Where in royal town Kishkindha, Bali ruled with warlike fame,
And a shout like troubled ocean's or like tempest's deafening roar
Spake Sugriva's mighty challenge to the victor king once more!
Bali knew that proud defiance shaking sky and solid ground,
And like sun by eclipse shaded, dark and pale he looked around,
And his teeth were set in anger and a passion lit his eye,
As a tempest stirs a torrent when its lilies scattered lie,
And he rose in wrath terrific with a thought of vengeance dread,
And the firm earth shook and trembled 'neath his proud and haughty tread!
But the true and tender Tara held her husband and her lord,
And a woman's deeper wisdom spake in woman's loving word:
"Wherefore like a rain-fed torrent swells thy passion in its sway,
Thoughts of wrath like withered blossoms from thy bosom cast away,
Wait till dawns another morning, wait till thou dost truly know,
With what strength and added forces comes again thy humbled foe.
Crushed in combat faint Sugriva fled in terror and in pain,
Trust me, not without a helper comes he to the fight again,
Trust me, lord, that loud defiance is no coward's falt'ring cry,
Conscious strength not hesitation speaks in voice so proud and high!
Much my woman's heart misgives me, not without a mighty aid,
Not without a daring comrade comes Sugriva to this raid,
Not with feeble friend Sugriva seeks alliance in his need,
Nor invokes a powerless chieftain in his lust and in his greed.
Mighty is his royal comrade,—listen, husband, to my word,
What my son in forest confines from his messengers hath heard,—

Princes from Ayodhya's country peerless in the art of war,
Rama and the valiant Lakshman in these forests wander far,
Much I fear, these matchless warriors have their aid and counsel lent
Conscious of his strength Sugriva hath this proud defiance sent!
To his foes resistless Rama is a lightning from above,
To his friends a tree of shelter, soul of tenderness and love,
Dearer than his love of glory is his love to heal and bless,
Dearer than the crown and empire is his hermit's holy dress,
Not with such, my lord and husband, seek a vain unrighteous strife,
For, like precious ores in mountains, virtues dwell in Rama's life.
Make Sugriva thy companion, make him Regent and thy Heir,
Discord with a younger brother rends an empire broad and fair,
Make thy peace with young Sugriva, nearest and thy dearest kin,
Brother's love is truest safety, brother's hate is deadliest sin!
Trust me, monarch of Kishkindha, trust thy true and faithful wife,
Thou shalt find no truer comrade than Sugriva in thy life,
Wage not then a war fraternal, smite him not in sinful pride,
As a brother and a warrior let him stand by Bali's side.
Listen to thy Tara's counsel if to thee is Tara dear,
If thy wife is true in duty scorn not Tara's wifely tear,
Not with Rama prince of virtue wage a combat dread and high,
Not with Rama prince of valour, peerless like the Lord of sky!"

III The Fall of Bali

Star-eyed Tara softly counselled pressing to her consort's side,
Mighty Bali proudly answered with a warrior's lofty pride:
"Challenge of a humbled foeman and a younger's haughty scorn
May not, shall not, tender Tara, by a king be meekly borne!
Bali turns not from encounter even with his dying breath,
Insult from a foe, unanswered, is a deeper stain than death,
And Sugriva's quest for combat Bali never shall deny,
Though sustained by Rama's forces and by Rama's prowess high!
Free me from thy sweet embraces and amidst thy maids retire,
Woman's love and soft devotion woman's timid thoughts inspire,
Fear not, Tara, blood of brother Bali's honour shall not stain,
I will quell his proud presumption, chase him from this realm again,
Free me from thy loving dalliance, midst thy damsels seek thy place,
Till I come a happy victor to my Tara's fond embrace!"

Slow and sad with sweet obeisance Tara stepped around her lord,
Welling tear-drops choked her accents as she prayed in stifled word,
Slow and sad with swelling bosom Tara with her maids retired,
Bali issued proud and stately with the thought of vengeance fired!
Hissing like an angry cobra, city's lofty gates he past,
And his proud and angry glances fiercely all around he cast,
Till he saw bold Sugriva, gold-complexioned, red with ire,
Girded for the dubious combat, flaming like the forest fire!
Bali braced his warlike garments and his hand he lifted high,
Bold Surgiva raised his right arm with a proud and answering cry,
Bali's eyes were red as copper and his chain was burnished gold,
To his brother bold Sugriva thus he spake in accents bold:
"Mark this iron fist, intruder, fatal is its vengeful blow,
Crushed and smitten thou shalt perish and to nether world shalt go,"
"Nay that fate awaits thee, Bali," spake Sugriva armed for strife,
"When this right arm smites thy forehead, from thy bosom rends thy life!"
Closed the chiefs in fatal combat, each resistless in his pride,
And like running rills from mountains poured their limbs the purple tide,
Till Sugriva quick uprooting *Sal* tree from the jungle wood,
As the dark cloud hurls the lightning, hurled it where his brother stood,
Staggering 'neath the blow terrific Bali reeled and almost fell,
As a proud ship overladen reels upon the ocean's swell!
But with fiercer rage and fury Bali in his anguish rose,
And with mutual blows they battled,—brothers and relentless foes,
Like the sun and moon in conflict or like eagles in their fight,
Still they fought with cherished hatred and an unforgotten spite,
Till with mightier force and fury Bali did his younger quell,
Faint Sugriva fiercely struggling 'neath his brother's prowess fell!
Still the wrathful rivals wrestled with their bleeding arms and knees,
With their nails like claws of tigers and with riven rocks and trees,
And as INDRA battles Vritra in the tempest's pealing roar,
Blood-stained Bali, red Sugriva, strove and struggled, fought and tore,
Till Sugriva faint and falt'ring fell like Vritra from the sky,
To his comrade and his helper turned his faint and pleading eye!
Ah! those soft and pleading glances smote the gentle Rama's heart,
On his bow of ample stature Rama raised the fatal dart,

Like the fatal disc of YAMA was his proudly circled bow,
Like a snake of deadly poison flew his arrow swift and low,
Wingéd dwellers of the forest heard the twang with trembling fear,
Echoing woods gave back the accent, lightly fled the startled deer,
And as INDRA's flag is lowered when the Aswin winds prevail,
Lofty Bali pierced and bleeding by that fatal arrow fell!

IV The Consecration of Sugriva

Tears of love the tender Tara on her slaughtered hero shed,
E'en Sugriva's bosom melted when he saw his brother dead,
And each Vanar chief and warrior, *maha-matra,*[1] lord and peer,
Gathered round the sad Sugriva wet with unavailing tear!
And they girt the victor Rama and they praised his wond'rous might,
As the heavenly *rishis* gather circling BRAHMA's throne of light,
Hanuman of sun-like radiance, lofty as a hill of gold,
Clasped his hands in due obeisance, spake in accents calm and bold:
"By thy prowess, peerless Rama, prince Sugriva is our lord,
To his father's throne and empire, to his father's town restored,
Cleansed by bath and fragrant unguents and in royal garments gay,
He shall with his gold and garlands homage to the victor pay,
To the rock-bound fair Kishkindha do thy friendly footsteps bend,
And as monarch of the Vanars consecrate thy grateful friend!"
"Fourteen years," so Rama answered, "by his father's stern command,
In a city's sacred confines banished Rama may not stand,
Friend and comrade, brave Sugriva, enter thou the city wall,
And assume the royal sceptre in thy father's royal hall.
Gallant Angad, son of Bali, is in regal duties trained,
Ruling partner of thy empire be the valiant prince ordained,
Eldest son of eldest brother,—such the maxim that we own,—
Worthy of his father's kingdom, doth ascend his father's throne.
Listen! 'tis the month of *Sravan,*[2] now begins the yearly rain,
In these months of wind and deluge thoughts of vengeful strife were vain,
Enter then thy royal city, fair Kishkindha be thy home,
With my ever faithful Lakshman let me in these mountains roam.
Spacious is yon rocky cavern fragrant with the mountain air,
Bright with lily and with lotus, watered by a streamlet fair,

[1] A royal officer.

[2] *Sravana,* July-August.

Here we dwell till month of *Kartik*[1] when the clouded sky will clear,
And the time of war and vengeance on our foeman shall be near."
Bowing to the victor's mandate brave Sugriva marched in state,
And the host of thronging Vanars entered by the city gate,
Prostrate chiefs with due obeisance rendered homage, one and all,
And Sugriva blessed his people, stepped within the palace hall.
And they sprinkled sacred water from the vases jewel-graced,
And they waved the fan of *chowri,*[2] raised the sun-shade silver-laced,
And they spread the gold and jewel, grain and herb and fragrant *ghee,*[3]
Sapling twigs and bending branches, blossoms from the flowering tree,
Milk-white garments gem-bespangled, and the *Chandan's* fragrant dye,
Wreaths and spices, snow-white lilies, lotus azure as the sky,
Jatarupa and *Priyangu,*[4] honey, curd and holy oil,
Costly sandals gilt and jewelled, tiger-skin the hunter's spoil!
Decked in gold and scented garlands, robed in radiance rich and rare,
Sweetly stepped around Sugriva sixteen maidens passing fair,
Priests received the royal bounty, gift and garment gold-belaced,
And they lit the holy altar with the sacred *mantra* graced,
And they poured the sweet libation on the altar's lighted flame,
And on throne of royal splendour placed the chief of royal fame!
On a high and open terrace with auspicious garlands graced,
Facing eastward, in his glory was the brave Sugriva placed,
Water from each holy river, from each *tirtha* famed of old,
From the broad and boundless ocean, was arranged in jars of gold,
And from vase and horn of wild bull, on their monarch and their lord,
Holy consecrating water chiefs and loyal courtiers poured.
Gaya and the great Gavaksha, Gandha-madan proud and brave,
Hanuman held up the vases, Jambman his succour gave,
And they laved the king Sugriva as Immortals in the sky
Consecrate the star-eyed INDRA in his mansions bright and high,
And a shout of joy and triumph, like the pealing voice of war,
Spake Sugriva's consecration to the creatures near and far!
Duteous still to Rama's mandate, as his first-born and his own,
King Sugriva named young Angad sharer of his royal throne,
Gay and bannered town Kishkindha hailed Sugriva's gracious word,
Tender Tara wiped her tear-drops bowing to a younger lord!

[1] *Kartika,* October-November.
[2] Fan made from the tail of the Indian yak.
[3] Or *ghrita,* clarified butter.
[4] Fragrant ointment.

V The Rains in the Nilgiri Mountains

"Mark the shadowing rain and tempest," Rama to his brother said,
As on Malya's cloud-capped ranges in their hermit-guise they strayed,
"Massive clouds like rolling mountains gather thick and gather high,
Lurid lightnings glint and sparkle, pealing thunders shake the sky,
Pregnant with the ocean moisture by the solar ray instilled,
Now the skies like fruitful mothers are with grateful waters filled!
Mark the folds of cloudy masses, ladder-like of smooth ascent,
One could almost reach the Sun-god, wreath him with a wreath of scent,
And when glow these heavy masses red and white with evening's glow,
One could almost deem them sword-cuts branded by some heavenly foe!
Mark the streaks of golden lustre lighting up the checkered sky,
Like a lover *chandan*-painted in each breeze it heaves a sigh,
And the earth is hot and feverish, moistened with the tears of rain,
Sighting like my anguished Sita when she wept in woe and pain!
Fresh and sweet like draught of nectar is the rain-besprinkled breeze,
Fragrant with the *ketak*[1] blossom, scented by the camphor trees,
Fresh and bold each peak and mountain bathed in soft descending rain,
So they sprinkle holy water when they bless a monarch's reign!
Fair and tall as holy hermits, stand yon shadow-mantled hills,
Murmuring *mantras* with the zephyr, robed in threads of sparkling rills,
Fair and young as gallant coursers neighing forth their thunder cries,
Lashed by golden whips of lightning are the dappled sunlit skies!
Ah, my lost and loving Sita! writhing in a Raksha's power,
As the lightning shakes and quivers in this dark tempestuous shower,
Shadows thicken on the prospect, flower and leaf are wet with rain,
And each passing object, Lakshman, wakes in me a thought of pain!
Joyously from throne and empire with my Sita I could part,
As the stream erodes its margin, Sita's absence breaks my heart,
Rain and tempest cloud the prospect as they cloud my onward path,
Dubious is my darksome future, mighty is my foeman's wrath!
Ravan monarch of the Rakshas,—so Jatayu said and died,—
In some unknown forest fastness doth my sorrowing Sita hide,
But Sugriva true and faithful seeks the Raksha's secret hold,
Firm in faith and fixed in purpose we will face our foeman bold!"

[1] A strong-scented plant.

VI The Quest for Sita

Past the rains, the marshalled Vanars gathered round Sugriva bold,
And unto a gallant chieftain thus the king his purpose told:
"Brave in war and wise in counsel! take ten thousand of my best,
Seek the hiding-place of Ravan in the regions of the East.
Seek each ravine rock and forest and each shadowy hill and cave,
Far where bright Sarayu's waters mix with Ganga's ruddy wave,
And where Jumna's dark blue waters ceaseless roll in regal pride,
And the Sone through leagues of country spreads its torrents far and wide.
Seek where in Videha's empire castled towns and hamlets shine,
In Kosala and in Malwa and by Kasi's sacred shrine,
Magadh rich in peopled centres, Pundra region of the brave,
Anga rich in corn and cattle on the eastern ocean wave.
Seek where clans of skilful weavers dwell upon the eastern shore,
And from virgin mines of silver miners work the sparkling ore.
In the realms of uncouth nations, in the islets of the sea,
In the mountains of the ocean, wander far and wander free!"
Next to Nila son of AGNI, Jambaman VIDAHATA's son,
Hanuman the son of MARUT, famed for deeds of valour done,
Unto Gaya and Gavaksha, Gandha-madan true and tried,
Unto Angad prince and regent, thus the brave Sugriva cried:
"Noblest, bravest of our chieftains, greatest of our race are ye,
Seek and search the southern regions, rock and ravine, wood and tree,
Search the thousand peaks of Vindhya lifting high its misty head,
Through the gorges of Narmada rolling o'er its rocky bed,
By the gloomy Godovari and by Krishna's wooded stream,
Through Utkala's sea-girt forests tinged by morning's early gleam.
Search the towns of famed Dasarna and Avanti's rocky shore,
And the uplands of Vidarbha and the mountains of Mysore,
Land of Matsyas and Kalingas and Kausika's regions fair,
Trackless wilderness of Dandak seek with anxious toil and care.
Search the empire of the Andhras, of the sister-nations three,—
Cholas, Cheras and the Pandyas dwelling by the southern sea,
Pass Kaveri's spreading waters, Malya's mountains towering brave,
Seek the isle of Tamra-parni, gemmed upon the ocean wave!"
To Susena chief and elder,—Tara's noble sire was he,—
Spake Sugriva with obeisance and in accents bold and free:

"Take my lord, a countless army of the bravest and the best,
Search where beats the sleepless ocean on the regions of the West.
Search the country of Saurashtras, of Bahlikas strong and brave,
And each busy mart and seaport on the western ocean wave,
Castles girt by barren mountains, deserts by the sandy sea,
Forests of the fragrant *ketak*, regions of the *tamal* tree!
Search the ocean port of Pattan shaded by its fruitful trees,
Where the feathery groves of cocoa court the balmy western breeze,
Where on peaks of Soma-giri lordly lions wander free,
Where the waters of the Indus mingle with the mighty sea!"
Lastly to the valiant chieftain Satavala strong and brave,
For the quest of saintly Sita thus his mighty mandate gave:
"Hie thee, gallant Satavala, with thy forces wander forth,
To the peaks of Himalaya, to the regions of the North!
Mlechchas and the wild Pulindas in the rocky regions dwell,
Madra chiefs and mighty Kurus live within each fertile vale,
Wild Kambojas of the mountains, Yavanas of wondrous skill,
Sakas swooping from their gorges, Pattanas of iron will!
Search the woods of *devadaru*[1] mantling Himalaya's side,
And the forests of the *lodhra*[2] spreading in their darksome pride,
Search the land of Soma-srama where the gay *Gandharvas* dwell
In the tableland of Kala search each rock and ravine well!
Cross the snowy Himalaya, and Sudarsan's holy peak,
Deva-sakha's wooded ranges which the feathered songsters seek,
Cross the vast and dreary region void of stream or wooded hill,
Till you reach the white Kailasa, home of Gods, serene and still!
Pass Kuvera's pleasant regions, search the Krauncha mountain well,
And the land where warlike females and the horse-faced women dwell,
Halt not till you reach the country where the Northern Kurus rest,
Utmost confines of the wide earth, home of Gods and Spirits blest!"

BOOK VIII SITA-SANDESA

(*Sita Discovered*)

AMONG THE MANY CHIEFS sent by Sugriva in different directions in search of Sita, Hanuman succeeded in the quest and discovered Sita in Ceylon. Ceylon is separated from India by a broad channel of the sea, and

[1] The Himalayan pine. [2] A tree.

Hanuman leaped, or rather flew through the air, across the channel, and lighted on the island. Sita, scorning the proposals of Ravan, was kept in confinement in a garden of *Asoka* trees, surrounded by a terrible guard of Raksha females; and in this hard confinement she remained true and faithful to her lord. Hanuman gave her a token from Rama, and carried back to Rama a token which she sent of her undying affection and truth.

The portions translated in this Book form the whole of the main portions of Sections xv., xxxi., xxxvi., and lxvi. of Book v. of the original text.

I Sita in the Asoka Garden

Crossed the ocean's boundless waters, Hanuman in duty brave,
Lighted on the emerald island girded by the sapphire wave,
And in tireless quest of Sita searched the margin of the sea,
In a dark *Asoka*[1] garden hid himself within a tree.
Creepers threw their clasping tendrils round the trees of ample height,
Stately palm and feathered cocoa, fruit and blossom pleased the sight,
Herds of tame and gentle creatures in the grassy meadow strayed,
Kokils[2] sang in leafy thicket, birds of plumage lit the shade,
Limpid lakes of scented lotus with their fragrance filled the air,
Homes and huts of rustic beauty peeped through bushes green and fair,
Blossoms rich in tint and fragrance in the checkered shadow gleamed,
Clustering fruits of golden beauty in the yellow sunlight beamed!
Brightly shone the red *Asoka* with the morning's golden ray,
Karnikara and *Kinsuka*[3] dazzling as the light of day,
Brightly grew the flower of *Champak* in the vale and on the reef,
Punnaga and *Saptaparna* with its seven-fold scented leaf,
Rich in blossoms many tinted, grateful to the ravished eye,
Gay and green and glorious Lanka was like garden of the sky,
Rich in fruit and laden creeper and in beauteous bush and tree,
Flower-bespangled golden Lanka was like gem-bespangled sea!
Rose a palace in the woodlands girt by pillars strong and high,
Snowy-white like fair Kailasa cleaving through the azure sky,
And its steps were ocean coral and its pavements yellow gold,
White and gay and heaven-aspiring rose the structure high and bold!

[1] Name of a flower, orange and scarlet.
[2] An Indian singing bird.
[3] All names of flowers.

By the rich and royal mansion Hanuman his eyes did rest,
On a woman sad and sorrowing in her sylvan garments drest,
Like the moon obscured and clouded, dim with shadows deep and dark,
Like the smoke-enshrouded red fire, dying with a feeble spark,
Like the tempest-pelted lotus by the wind and torrent shaken,
Like the beauteous star Rohini by a *graha*[1] overtaken!
Fasts and vigils paled her beauty, tears bedimmed her tender grace,
Anguish dwelt within her bosom, sorrow darkened on her face,
And she lived by Rakshas guarded, as a faint and timid deer,
Severed from her herd and kindred when the prowling wolves are near,
And her raven locks ungathered hung behind in single braid,
And her gentle eye was lightless, and her brow was hid in shade!
"This is she! the peerless princess, Rama's consort loved and lost,
This is she! the saintly Sita, by a cruel fortune crost,"
Hanuman thus thought and pondered: "On her graceful form I spy,
Gems and gold by sorrowing Rama oft depicted with a sigh,
On her ears the golden pendants and the tiger's sharpened tooth,
On her arms the jewelled bracelets, tokens of unchanging truth,
On her pallid brow and bosom still the radiant jewels shine,
Rama with a sweet affection did in early days entwine!
Hermit's garments clothe her person, braided in her raven hair,
Matted bark trees of forest drape her neck and bosom fair,
And a dower of dazzling beauty still bedecks her peerless face,
Though the shadowing tinge of sorrow darkens all her earlier grace!
This is she! the soft-eyed Sita, wept with unavailing tear,
This is she! the faithful consort, unto Rama ever dear,
Unforgetting and unchanging, truthful still in deed and word,
Sita in her silent suffering sorrows for her absent lord,
Still for Rama lost but cherished, Sita heaves the choking sigh,
Sita lives for righteous Rama, for her Rama she would die!"

II The Voice of Hope

Hanuman from leafy shelters lifts his voice in sacred song,
Till the tale of Rama's glory Lanka's woods and vales prolong:
"Listen, Lady, to my story;—Dasa-ratha famed in war,
Rich in steeds and royal tuskers, armèd men and battle car,

[1] The spirit of darkness, responsible for eclipse.

Ruled his realm in truth and virtue, in his bounty ever free,
Of the mighty race of Raghu mightiest king and monarch he,
Robed in every royal virtue, great in peace in battle brave,
Blest in bliss of grateful nations, blest in blessings which he gave!
And his eldest-born and dearest, Rama soul of righteous might,
Shone, as mid the stars resplendent shines the radiant Lord of Night,
True unto his sacred duty, true unto his kith and kin,
Friend of piety and virtue, punisher of crime and sin,
Loved in all his spacious empire, peopled mart and hermit's den,
With a truer deeper kindness Rama loved his subject men!
Dasa-ratha, promise-fettered, then his cruel mandate gave,
Rama with his wife and brother lived in woods and rocky cave,
And he slayed the deer of jungle and he slept in leafy shade,
Stern destroyer of the Rakshas in the pathless forests strayed,
Till the monarch of the Rakshas,—fraudful is his impious life,—
Cheated Rama in the jungle, from his cottage stole his wife!
Long lamenting lone and weary Rama wandered in the wood,
Searched for Sita in the jungle where his humble cottage stood,
Godavari's gloomy gorges, Krishna's dark and wooded shore,
And the ravine, rock and valley, and the cloud-capped mountain hoar!
Then he met the sad Sugriva in wild Malya's dark retreat,
Won for him his father's empire and his father's royal seat,
Now Sugriva's countless forces wander far and wander near,
In the search of stolen Sita still unto his Rama dear!
I am henchman of Sugriva and the mighty sea have crost,
In the quest of hidden Sita, Rama's consort loved and lost,
And methinks that form of beauty, peerless shape of woman's grace,
Is my Rama's dear-loved consort, Rama's dear-remembered face!"
Hushed the voice: the ravished Sita cast her wond'ring eyes around,
Whence that song of sudden gladness, whence that soul-entrancing sound?
Dawning hope and rising rapture overflowed her widowed heart,
Is it dream's deceitful whisper which the cruel Fates impart?

III Rama's Token

"'Tis no dream's deceitful whisper!" Hanuman spake to the dame,
As from darksome leafy shelter he to Rama's consort came,

"Rama's messenger and vassal, token from thy lord I bring,
Mark this bright ring, jewel-lettered with the dear name of thy king,
For the loved and cherished Sita is to Rama ever dear,
And he sends his loving message and his force is drawing near!"
Sita held that tender token from her loved and cherished lord,
And once more herself she fancied to his loving arms restored,
And her pallid face was lighted and her soft eye sent a spark,
As the Moon regains her lustre freed from *Rahu's*[1] shadows dark!
And with voice of deep emotion in each softly whispered word,
Spake her thoughts in gentle accents of her consort and her lord:
"Messenger of love of Rama! Dauntless is thy deed and bold,
Thou hast crossed the boundless ocean to the Raksha's castled hold,
Thou hast crossed the angry billows which confess no monarch's sway,
O'er the face of rolling waters found thy unresisted way,
Thou hast done what living mortal never sought to do before,
Dared the Raksha in his island, Ravan in his sea-girt shore!
Speak, if Rama lives in safety in the woods or by the hill,
And if young and gallant Lakshman faithful serves his brother still,
Speak, if Rama in his anger and his unforgiving ire,
Hurls destruction on my captor like the world-consuming fire,
Speak, if Rama in his sorrow wets his pale and drooping eye,
If the thought of absent Sita wakes within his heart a sigh!
Doth my husband seek alliance with each wild and warlike chief,
Striving for a speedy vengeance and for Sita's quick relief,
Doth he stir the warlike races to a fierce and vengeful strife,
Dealing death to ruthless Rakshas for this insult on his wife,
Doth he still in fond remembrance cherish Sita loved of yore,
Nursing in his hero-bosom tender sorrows evermore!
Didst thou hear from far Ayodhya, from Kausalya royal dame,
From the true and tender Bharat prince of proud and peerless fame,
Didst thou hear if royal Bharat leads his forces to the fight,
Conquering Ravan's scattered army in his all-resistless might,
Didst thou hear if brave Sugriva marshals Vanars in his wrath,
And the young and gallant Lakshman seeks to cross the ocean path?"
Hanuman with due obeisance placed his hand upon his head,
Bowed unto the queenly Sita and in gentle accents said:
"Trust me, Lady, valiant Rama soon will greet his saintly wife,
E'en as INDRA greets his goddess, SACHI dearer than his life,

[1] The spirit of darkness.

Trust me, Sita, conquering Rama comes with panoply of war,
Shaking Lanka's sea-girt mountains, slaying Rakshas near and far!
He shall cross the boundless ocean with the battle's dread array,
He shall smite the impious Ravan and the cruel Rakshas slay,
Mighty Gods and strong Asuras shall not hinder Rama's path,
When at Lanka's gates he thunders with his more than godlike wrath,
Deadly YAMA, all-destroying, pales before his peerless might,
When his red right arm of vengeance wrathful Rama lifts to smite!
By the lofty Mandar mountains, by the fruit and root I seek,
By the cloud-obstructing Vindhyas, and by Malya's towering peak,
I will swear, my gentle Lady, Rama's vengeance draweth nigh,
Thou shalt see his beaming visage like the Lord of Midnight Sky,
Firm in purpose Rama waiteth on the Prasra-vana hill,
As upon the huge Airavat, INDRA, motionless and still!
Flesh of deer nor forest honey tasteth Rama true and bold,
Till he rescues cherished Sita from the Raksha's castled hold,
Thoughts of Sita leave nót Rama dreary day or darksome night,
Till his vengeance deep and dreadful crushes Ravan in his might,
Forest flower nor scented creeper pleases Rama's anguished heart,
Till he wins his wedded consort by his death-compelling dart!"

IV Sita's Token

Token from her raven tresses Sita to the Vanar gave,
Hanuman with dauntless valour crossed once more the ocean wave,
Where in Prasra-vana's mountain Rama with his brother stayed,
Jewel from the brow of Sita by her sorrowing consort laid,
Spake of Ravan's foul endearment and his loathsome loving word,
Spake of Sita's scorn and anger and her truth unto her lord,
Tears of sorrow and affection from the warrior's eyelids start,
As his consort's loving token Rama presses to his heart!
"As the mother-cow, Sugriva, yields her milk beside her young,
Welling tears upon this token yields my heart by anguish wrung,
Well I know this dear-loved jewel sparkling with the ray of heaven,
Born in sea, by mighty INDRA to my Sita's father given,
Well I know this tender token, Janak placed it on her hair,
When she came my bride and consort decked in beauty rich and rare,
Well I know this sweet memorial, Sita wore it on her head,
And her proud and peerless beauty on the gem a lustre shed!

Ah, methinks the gracious Janak stands again before my eye,
With a father's fond affection, with a monarch's stature high,
Ah, methinks my bride and consort, she who wore it on her brow,
Stands again before the altar, speaks again her loving vow,
Ah, the sad, the sweet remembrance! ah, the happy days gone by,
Once again, O loving vision, wilt thou gladden Rama's eye!
Speak again, my faithful vassal, how my Sita wept and prayed,
Like the water to the thirsty, dear to me what Sita said,
Did she send this sweet remembrance as a blessing from above,
As a true and tender token of a woman's changeless love,
Did she waft her heart's affection o'er the billows of the sea,
Wherefore came she not in person from her foes and fetters free?
Hanuman, my friend and comrade, lead me to the distant isle,
Where my soft-eyed Sita lingers midst the Rakshas dark and vile,
Where my true and tender consort like a lone and stricken deer,
Girt by Rakshas stern and ruthless sheds the unavailing tear,
Where she weeps in ceaseless anguish, sorrow-stricken, sad and pale,
Like the Moon by dark clouds shrouded then her light and lustre fail!
Speak again, my faithful henchman, loving message of my wife,
Like some potent drug her accents renovate my fainting life,
Arm thy forces, friend Sugriva, Rama shall not brook delay,
While in distant Lanka's confines Sita weeps the livelong day,
Marshal forth thy bannered forces, cross the ocean in thy might,
Rama speeds on wings of vengeance Lanka's impious lord to smite!"

BOOK IX RAVANA-SABHA

(*The Council of War*)

RAVAN WAS THOROUGHLY FRIGHTENED by the deeds of Hanuman. For Hanuman had not only penetrated into his island and discovered Sita in her imprisonment, but had also managed to burn down a great portion of the city before he left the island. Ravan called a Council of War, and as might be expected, all the advisers heedlessly advised war.

All but Bibhishan. He was the youngest brother of Ravan, and condemned the folly and the crime by which Ravan was seeking a war with the righteous and unoffending Rama. He advised that Sita should be restored to her lord and peace made with Rama. His voice was drowned in the cries of more violent advisers.

It is noticeable that Ravan's second brother, Kumbha-karna, also had the courage to censure his elder's action. But unlike Bibhishan he was determined to fight for his king whether he was right or wrong. There is a touch of sublimity in this blind and devoted loyalty of Kumbha-karna to the cause of his king and his country.

Bibhishan was driven from the court with indignity, and joined the forces of Rama, to whom he gave much valuable information about Lanka and its warriors.

The passages translated in this Book form Sections vi., viii., ix., portions of Sections xii. and xv., and the whole of Section xvi. of Book vi. of the original text.

I Ravan Seeks Advice

Monarch of the mighty Rakshas, Ravan spake to warriors all,
Spake to gallant chiefs and princes gathered in his Council Hall:
"Listen, Princes, Chiefs, and Warriors! Hanuman our land hath seen,
Stealing through the woods of Lanka unto Rama's prisoned queen.
And audacious in his purpose and resistless in his ire,
Burnt our turret tower and temple, wasted Lanka's town with fire!
Speak your counsel, gallant leaders, Ravan is intent to hear,
Triumph waits on fearless wisdom, speak your thoughts without a fear,
Wisest monarchs act on counsel from his men for wisdom known,
Next are they who in their wisdom and their daring act alone,
Last, unwisest are the monarchs who nor death nor danger weigh,
Think not, ask not friendly counsel, by their passions borne away!
Wisest counsel comes from courtiers who in holy lore unite,
Next, when varying plans and reasons blending lead unto the right,
Last and worst, when stormy passions mark the hapless king's debate,
And his friends are disunited when his foe is at the gate!
Therefore freely speak your counsel and your monarch's task shall be
But to shape in deed and action what your wisest thoughts decree,
Speak with minds and hearts united, shape your willing monarch's deed,
Counsel peace, or Ravan's forces to a war of vengeance lead,
Ere Sugriva's countless forces cross the vast and boundless main,
Ere the wrathful Rama girdles Lanka with a living chain!"

II Prahasta's Speech

Dark and high as summer tempest mighty-armed Prahasta rose,
Spake in fierce and fiery accents hurling challenge on his foes:
"Wherefore, Ravan, quails thy bosom, gods against thee strive in vain,
Wherefore fear the feeble mortals, homeless hermits, helpless men?
Hanuman approached in secret, stealing like a craven spy,
Not from one in open combat would alive the Vanar fly,
Let him come with all his forces, to the confines of the sea
I will chase the scattered army and thy town from foeman free!
Not in fear and hesitation Ravan should repent his deed,
While his gallant Raksha forces stand beside him in his need,
Not in tears and vain repentance Sita to his consort yield,
While his chieftains guard his empire in the battle's gory field!"

III Durmukha's Speech

Durmukha of cruel visage and of fierce and angry word,
Rose within the Council Chamber, spake to Lanka's mighty lord:
"Never shall the wily foeman boast of insult on us flung,
Hanuman shall die a victim for the outrage and the wrong!
Stealing in unguarded Lanka through thy city's virgin gate,
He hath courted deep disaster and a dark untimely fate,
Stealing in the inner mansions where our dames and damsels dwell,
Hanuman shall die a victim,—tale of shame he shall not tell!
Need is none of Ravan's army, bid me seek the foe alone,
If he hides in sky or ocean or in nether regions thrown,
Need is none of gathered forces, Ravan's mandate I obey,
I will smite the bold intruder and his Vanar forces slay!"

IV Vajra-danshtra's Speech

Iron-toothéd Vajra-danshtra then arose in wrath and pride,
And his blood-stained mace of battle held in fury by his side,
"Wherefore, Ravan, waste thy forces on the foemen poor and vile,
Hermit Rama and his brother, Hanuman of impious wile,
Bid me,—with this mace of battle proud Sugriva I will slay,
Chase the helpless hermit brothers to the forests far away!

Or to deeper counsel listen! Varied shapes the Rakshas wear,
Let them wearing human visage, dressed as Bharat's troops appear,
Succour from his ruling brother Rama will in gladness greet,
Then with mace and blood-stained sabre we shall lay them at our feet,
Rock and javelin and arrow we shall on our foemen hail,
Till no poor surviving Vanar lives to tell the tragic tale!"

V Speech of Nikumbha and Vajra-Hanu

Then arose the brave Nikumbha,—Kumbha-karna's son was he,—
Spake his young heart's mighty passion in his accents bold and free:
"Need is none, O mighty monarch, for a battle or a war,
Bid me meet the homeless Rama and his brother wand'ring far,
Bid me face the proud Sugriva, Hanuman of deepest vile,
I will rid thee of thy foemen and of Vanars poor and vile!"
Rose the chief with jaw of iron, Vajra-hanu fierce and young,
Licked his lips like hungry tiger with his red and lolling tongue:
"Wherefore, monarch, dream of battle? Rakshas feed on human gore,
Let me feast upon thy foemen by the ocean's lonely shore,
Rama and his hermit brother, Hanuman who hides in wood,
Angad and the proud Sugriva soon shall be my welcome food!"

VI Bibhishan's Warning

Twenty warriors armed and girded in the Council Hall arose,
Thirsting for a war of vengeance, hurling challenge on the foes,
But Bibhishan deep in wisdom,—Ravan's youngest brother he,—
Spake the word of solemn warning, for his eye could farthest see:
"Pardon, king and honoured elder, if Bibhishan lifts his voice
'Gainst the wishes of the warriors and the monarch's fatal choice,
Firm in faith and strong in forces Rama comes with conqu'ring might,
Vain against a righteous warrior would unrighteous Ravan fight!
Think him not a common Vanar who transpassed the ocean wave,
Wrecked thy city tower and temple and a sign and warning gave,
Think him not a common hermit who Ayodhya ruled of yore,
Crossing India's streams and mountains, thunders now on Lanka's shore!
What dark deed of crime or folly hath the righteous Rama done,
That you stole his faithful consort unprotected and alone,

What offence or nameless insult hath the saintly Sita given,
She who chained in Lanka's prison pleads in piteous tear to Heaven?
Take my counsel, king and elder, Sita to her lord restore,
Wipe this deed of wrong and outrage, Rama's righteous grace implore,
Take my counsel, Raksha monarch, vain against him is thy might,
Doubly arméd is the hero,—he who battles for the right!
Render Sita to her Rama ere with vengeance swift and dire,
He despoils our peopled Lanka with his bow and brand and fire,
Render wife unto her husband ere in battle's dread array,
Rama swoops upon thy empire like a falcon on its prey,
Render to the lord his consort ere with blood of Rakshas slain,
Rama soaks the land of Lanka to the margin of the main!
Listen to my friendly counsel,—though it be I stand alone,—
Faithful friend by fiery foeman is this Dasa-ratha's son,
Listen to my voice of warning,—Rama's shafts are true and keen,
Flaming like the with'ring sunbeams on the summer's parchéd green,
Listen to my soft entreaty,—righteousness becomes the brave,
Cherish peace and cherish virtue and thy sons and daughters save!"

VII Kumbha-karna's Determination

Ravan's brother Kumbha-karna, from his wonted slumber woke:
Mightiest he of all the Rakshas, thus in solemn accents spoke:
"Truly speaks the wise Bibhishan; ere he stole a hermit's wife,
Ravan should have thought and pondered, courted not a causeless strife,
Ere he did this deed of folly, Ravan should have counsel sought,
Tardy is the vain repentance when the work of shame is wrought!
Word of wisdom timely spoken saves from death and dangers dire,
Vain is grief for crime committed,—offerings to unholy fire,
Vain is hero's worth or valour if by foolish counsel led,
Toil and labour fail and perish save when unto wisdom wed,
And the foeman speeds in triumph o'er a heedless monarch's might,
As through gaps of Krauncha mountains *hansas*[1] speed their southern flight!
Ravan, thou hast sought unwisely Sita in her calm retreat,
As the wild and heedless hunter feeds upon the poisoned meat,
Nathless, faithful Kumbha-karna will his loyal duty know,
He shall fight his monarch's battle, he shall face his brother's foe!

[1] Geese.

True to brother and to monarch, be he right or be he wrong,
Kumbha-karna fights for Lanka 'gainst her foemen fierce and strong,
Recks not if the mighty INDRA and VIVASVAT cross his path,
Or the wild and stormy MARUTS, AGNI in his fiery wrath!
For the Lord of Sky shall tremble when he sees my stature high,
And he hears his thunders echoed by my loud and answering cry,
Rama armed with ample quiver shall no second arrow send,
Ere I slay him in the battle and his limb from limb I rend!
Wiser heads than Kumbha-karna right and true from wrong may know,
Faithful to his race and monarch he shall face the haughty foe,
Joy thee in thy pleasure, Ravan, rule thy realm in regal pride,
When I slay the hermit Rama, widowed Sita be thy bride!"

VIII Indrajit's Assurance

Indrajit the son of Ravan then his lofty purpose told,
'Midst the best and boldest Rakshas none so gallant, none so bold:
"Wherefore, noble king and father, pale Bibhishan's counsel hear,
Scion of the race of Rakshas speaks not thus in dastard fear,
In this race of valiant Rakshas, known for deeds of glory done,
Feeble-hearted, faint in courage, save Bibhishan, there is none!
Matched with meanest of the Rakshas what are sons of mortal men,
What are homeless human brothers hiding in the hermit's den,
Shall we yield to weary wand'rers, driven from their distant home,
Chased from throne and father's kingdom in the desert woods to roam?
Lord of sky and nether region, INDRA 'neath my weapon fell,
Pale Immortals know my valour and my warlike deeds can tell,
INDRA's tusker, huge Airavat, by my prowess overthrown,
Trumpeted its anguished accents, shaking sky and earth with groan,
Mighty God and dauntless Daityas fame of Indrajit may know,
And he yields not, king and father, to a homeless human foe!"

IX Ravan's Decision

Anger swelled in Ravan's bosom as he cast his blood-red eye
On Bibhishan calm and fearless, and he spake in accents high:
"Rather dwell with open foemen or in homes where cobras haunt,
Than with faithless friends who falter and whom fears of danger daunt!

O, the love of near relations!—false and faithless, full of guile,—
How they sorrow at my glory, at my danger how they smile,
How they grieve with secret anguish when my loftier virtues shine,
How they harbour jealous envy when deserts and fame are mine,
How they scan with curious vision every fault that clouds my path,
How they wait with eager longing till I fall in Fortune's wrath!
Ask the elephants of jungle how their captors catch and bind,—
Not by fire and feeble weapons, but by treason of their kind,
Not by javelin or arrow,—little for these arms they care,—
But their false and fondling females lead them to the hunter's snare!
Long as nourishment and vigour shall impart the milk of cow,
Long as woman shall be changeful, hermits holy in their vow,
Aye, so long shall near relations hate us in their inner mind,
Mark us with a secret envy though their words be ne'er so kind!
Rain-drops fall upon the lotus but unmingling hang apart,
False relations round us gather but they blend not heart with heart,
Winter clouds are big with thunder but they shed no freshening rain,
False relations smile and greet us but their soothing words are vain,
Bees are tempted by the honey but from flower to flower they range,
False relations share our favour but in secret seek a change!
Lying is thy speech, Bibhishan, secret envy lurks within,
Thou wouldst rule thy elder's empire, thou wouldst wed thy elder's queen,
Take thy treason to the foemen,—brother's blood I may not shed,—
Other Raksha craven-hearted by my royal hands had bled!"

X *Bibhishan's Departure*

"This to me!" Bibhishan answered, as with fiery comrades four,
Rose in arms the wrathful Raksha and in fury rushed before,
"But I spare thee, royal Ravan, angry words thy lips have passed,
False and lying and unfounded is the censure thou hast cast!
True Bibhishan sought thy safety, strove to save his elder's reign,—
Speed thee now to thy destruction since all counsel is in vain,
Many are thy smiling courtiers who with honeyed speech beguile,—
Few are they with true and candour speak their purpose void of guile!
Blind to reason and to wisdom, Ravan, seek thy destined fate,
For thy impious lust of woman, for thy dark unrighteous hate.

Blind to danger and destruction, deaf to word of counsel given,
By the flaming shafts of Rama thou shalt die by will of Heaven!
Yet, O! yet, my king and elder, let me plead with latest breath,
'Gainst the death of race and kinsmen, 'gainst my lord and brother's death,
Ponder yet, O Raksha monarch, save thy race and save thy own,
Ravan, part we now for ever,—guard thy ancient sea-girt throne!"

BOOK X YUDDHA

(*The War in Ceylon*)

RAMA CROSSED over with his army from India to Ceylon. There is a chain of islands across the strait, and the Indian poet supposes them to be the remains of a vast causeway which Rama built to cross over with his army.

The town of Lanka, the capital of Ceylon, was invested, and the war which followed was a succession of sallies by the great leaders and princes of Lanka. But almost every sally was repulsed, every chief was killed, and at last Ravan himself who made the last sally was slain and the war ended.

Among the numberless fights described in the original work, those of Ravan himself, his brother Kumbha-karna, and his son Indrajit, are the most important, and oftenest recited and listened to in India; and these have been rendered into English in this Book. And the reader will mark a certain method in the poet's estimate of the warriors who took part in these battles.

First and greatest among the warriors was Rama; he was never beaten by an open foe, never conquered in fair fight. Next to him, and to him only, was Ravan the monarch of Lanka; he twice defeated Lakshman in battle, and never retreated except before Rama. Next to Rama and to Ravan stood their brothers, Lakshman and Kumbha-karna; it is difficult to say who was the best of these two, for they fought only once, and it was a drawn battle. Fifth in order of prowess was Indrajit the son of Ravana, but he was the first in his magic art. Concealed in mists by his magic, he twice defeated both Rama and Lakshman; but in his last battle he had to face combat with Lakshman, and was slain. After these five warriors, pre-eminent for their prowess, various Vanars and Rakshas took their rank.

The war ended with the fall of Ravan and his funerals. The portions translated in this Book form the whole or portions of Sections xliv., xlviii.,

lix., lxvi., lxvii., and lxxiii., an abstract of Sections lxxv. to xci., and portions of Sections xciii., xcvi., ci., cii., ciii., cix., cx., and cxiii. of Book vi. of the original text.

I Indrajit's First Battle—The Serpent-Noose

Darkly round the leaguered city Rama's countless forces lay,
Far as Ravan cast his glances in the dawning light of day,
Wrath and anguish shook his bosom and the gates he opened wide,
And with ranks of charging Rakshas sallied with a Raksha's pride!
All the day the battle lasted, endless were the tale to tell,
What unnumbered Vanars perished and what countless Rakshas fell,
Darkness came, the fiery foemen urged the still unceasing fight,
Struggling with a deathless hatred fiercer in the gloom of night!
Onward came resistless Rakshas, laid Sugriva's forces low,
Crushed the broken ranks of Vanars, drank the red blood of the foe,
Bravely fought the scattered Vanars facing still the tide of war,
Struggling with the charging tusker and the steed and battle car,
Till at last the gallant Lakshman and the godlike Rama came,
And they swept the hosts of Ravan like a sweeping forest flame,
And their shafts like hissing serpents on the falt'ring foemen fell,
Fiercer grew the sable midnight with the dying shriek and yell!
Dust arose like clouds of summer from each thunder-sounding car,
From the hoofs of charging coursers, from the elephants of war,
Streams of red blood warm and bubbling issued from the countless slain,
Flooded battle's dark arena like the floods of summer rain,
Sound of trumpet and of bugle, drum and horn and echoing shell,
And the neigh of charging coursers and the tuskers' dying wail,
And the yell of wounded Rakshas and the Vanars' fierce delight,
Shook the earth and sounding welkin, waked the echoes of the night!
Six bright arrows Rama thundered from his weapon dark and dread,
Iron-toothéd Vajra-dranshtra and his fainting comrades fled,
Dauntless still the serried Rakshas, wave on wave succeeding came,
Perished under Rama's arrows as the moths upon the flame!
Indrajit the son of Ravan, Lanka's glory and her pride,
Matchless in his magic weapons came and turned the battle's tide,
What though Angad in his fury had his steeds and driver slayed,
Indrajit hid in the midnight battled from its friendly shade,

Shrouded in a cloud of darkness still he poured his darts like rain,
On young Lakshman and on Rama and on countless Vanars slain,
Matchless in his magic weapons, then he hurled his *Naga*[1]-dart,
Serpent noose upon his foemen draining lifeblood from their heart!
Vainly then the royal brothers fought the cloud-enshrouded foe,
Vainly sought the unseen warrior dealing unresisted blow,
Fastened by a noose of *Naga*[1] forced by hidden foe to yield.
Rama and the powerless Lakshman fell and fainted on the field!

II Sita's Lament

Indrajit ere dawned the morning entered in his father's hall,
Spake of midnight's darksome contest, Rama's death and Lakshman's fall,
And the proud and peerless Ravan clasped his brave and gallant son,
Praised him for his skill and valour and his deed of glory done,
And with dark and cruel purpose bade his henchmen yoke his car,
Bade them take the sorrowing Sita to the gory field of war!
Soon they harnessed royal coursers and they took the weeping wife,
Where her Rama, pierced and bleeding, seemed bereft of sense and life,
Brother lay beside his brother with their shattered mail and bow,
Arrows thick and dark with red blood spake the conquest of the foe,
Anguish woke in Sita's bosom and a dimness filled her eye,
And a widow's nameless sorrow burst in widow's mournful cry:
"Rama, lord and king and husband! didst thou cross the billowy sea,
Didst thou challenge death and danger, court thy fate to rescue me,
Didst thou hurl a fitting vengeance on the cruel Raksha force,
Till the hand of hidden foeman checked thy all-resistless course?
Breathes upon the earth no warrior who could face thee in the fight,
Who could live to boast his triumph o'er thy world-subduing might,
But the will of Fate is changeless, Death is mighty in his sway,—
Peerless Rama, faithful Lakshman, sleep the sleep that knows no day!
But I weep not for my Rama nor for Lakshman young and brave,
They have done a warrior's duty and have found a warrior's grave,
And I weep not for my sorrows,—sorrow marked me from my birth,—
Child of Earth I seek in suffering bosom of my mother Earth!
But I grieve for dear Kausalya, sonless mother, widowed queen,
How she reckons day and seasons in her anguish ever green.

[1] A snake; name of a tribe.

How she waits with eager longing till her Rama's exile o'er,
He would soothe her lifelong sorrow, bless her agéd eyes once more,
Sita's love! Ayodhya's monarch! Queen Kausalya's dearest born!
Rama soul of truth and virtue sleeps the sleep that knows no morn!"
Sorely wept the sorrowing Sita in her accents soft and low,
And the silent stars of midnight wept to witness Sita's woe,
But Trijata her companion,—though a Raksha woman she,—
Felt her soul subdued by sadness, spake to Sita tenderly:
"Weep not, sad and saintly Sita, shed not widow's tears in vain,
For thy lord is sorely wounded, but shall live to fight again,
Rama and the gallant Lakshman, fainting, not bereft of life,
They shall live to fight and conquer,—thou shalt be a happy wife,
Mark the Vanars' marshalled forces, listen to their warlike cries,
'Tis not thus the soldiers gather when a chief and hero dies,
'Tis not thus round lifeless leader muster warriors true and brave,
For when falls the dying helmsman, sinks the vessel in the wave!
Mark the ring of hopeful Vanars, how they watch o'er Rama's face,
How they guard the younger Lakshman beaming yet with living grace,
Trust me, sad and sorrowing Sita, marks of death these eyes can trace,
Shade of death's decaying fingers sweeps not o'er thy Rama's face!
Listen more, my gentle Sita, though a captive in our keep,
For thy woes and for thy anguish see a Raksha woman weep,
Though thy Rama armed in battle is our unrelenting foe,
For a true and stainless warrior see a Raksha filled with woe!
Fainting on the field of battle, blood-ensanguined in their face,
They shall live to fight and conquer, worthy of their gallant race,
Cold nor rigid are their features, darkness dwells not on their brow,
Weep not thus, my gentle Sita,—hasten we to Lanka now."
And Trijata spake no falsehood, by the winged Garuda's skill,
Rama and the valiant Lakshman lived to fight their foemen still!

III Ravan's First Battle—The Javelin-Stroke

'Gainst the God-assisted Rama, Ravan's efforts all were vain,
Leaguered Lanka vainly struggled in her adamantine chain,
Wrathful Rakshas with their forces vainly issued through the gate,
Chiefs and serried ranks of warriors met the same resistless fate!
Dark-eyed chief Dhumraksha sallied with the fierce tornado's shock,
Hanuman of peerless prowess slayed him with a rolling rock,

Iron-toothéd Vajra-danshtra dashed through countless Vanars slain,
But the young and gallant Angad laid him lifeless on the plain,
Akampan unshaken warrior issued out of Lanka's wall,
Hanuman was true and watchful, speedy was the Raksha's fall,
Then the mighty-armed Prahasta strove to break the hostile line,
But the gallant Nila felled him as the woodman fells the pine!
Bravest chiefs and countless soldiers sallied forth to face the fight,
Broke not Rama's iron circle, 'scraped not Rama's wondrous might,
Ravan could no longer tarry, for his mightiest chiefs were slain,
Foremost leaders, dearest kinsmen, lying on the gory plain!
"Lofty scorn of foes unworthy spared them from my flaming ire,
But the blood of slaughtered kinsmen claims from me a vengeance dire,"
Speaking thus the wrathful Ravan mounted on his thundering car,
Flame-resplendent was the chariot drawn by matchless steeds of war!
Beat of drum and voice of *sankha*[1] and the Raksha's battle cry,
Song of triumph, chanted *mantra,* smote the echoing vault of sky,
And the troops like cloudy masses with their eyes of lightning fire
Girt their monarch, as his legions girdle RUDRA in his ire!
Rolled the car with peal of thunder through the city's lofty gate,
And each fierce and fiery Raksha charged with warrior's deathless hate,
And the vigour of the onset cleft the stunned and scattered foe,
As a strong bark cleaves the billows riding on the ocean's brow!
Brave Sugriva king.of Vanars met the foeman fierce and strong,
And a rock with mighty effort on the startled Ravan flung,
Vain the toil, disdainful Ravan dashed aside the flying rock,
Brave Sugriva pierced by arrows fainted neath the furious shock.
Next Susena chief and elder, Nala and Gavaksha bold,
Hurled them on the path of Ravan speeding in his car of gold,
Vainly heaved the rock and missile, vainly did with trees assail,
Onward sped the conquering Ravan, pierced the fainting Vanars fell.
Hanuman the son of MARUT next against the Raksha came,
Fierce and strong as stormy MARUT, warrior of unrivalled fame,
But the Raksha's mighty onset gods nor mortals might sustain,
Hanuman in red blood welt'ring rolled upon the gory plain.
Onward rolled the car of Ravan, where the dauntless Nila stood,
Armed with rock and tree and missile, thirsting for the Raksha's blood,
Vainly fought the valiant Nila, pierced by Ravan's pointed dart,
On the gory field of battle poured the red blood of his heart.

[1] Conch-shell, used as bugle in war and festivities.

Onward through the scattered forces Ravan's conquering chariot came,
Where in pride and dauntless valour Lakshman stood of warlike fame,
Calm and proud the gallant Lakshman marked the all-resistless foe,
Boldly challenged Lanka's monarch as he held aloft his bow:
"Welcome, mighty Lord of Lanka! wage with me an equal strife,
Wherefore with thy royal prowess seek the humble Vanars' life!"
"Hath thy fate," so answered Ravan, "brought thee to thy deadly foe,
Welcome, valiant son of Raghu! Ravan longs to lay thee low!"
Then they closed in dubious battle, Lanka's Lord his weapon bent,
Seven bright arrows, keen and whistling, on the gallant Lakshman sent,
Vain the toil, for watchful Lakshman stout of heart and true of aim,
With his darts like shooting sunbeams cleft each arrow as it came.
Bleeding from the darts of Lakshman, pale with anger, wounded sore,
Ravan drew at last his *Sakti*,[1] gift of Gods in days of yore,
Javelin of flaming splendour, deadly like the shaft of Fate,
Ravan hurled on dauntless Lakshman in his fierce and furious hate.
Vain were Lakshman's human weapons aimed with skill directed well,
Pierced by *Sakti*, gallant Lakshman in his red blood fainting fell,
Wrathful Rama saw the combat and arose in godlike might,
Bleeding Ravan turned to Lanka, sought his safety in his flight.

IV Fall of Kumbha-Karna

Once more healed and strong and valiant, Lakshman in his arms arose,
Safe behind the gates of Lanka humbled Ravan shunned his foes,
Till the stalwart Kumbha-karna from his wonted slumbers woke,
Mightiest he of all the Rakshas;—Ravan thus unto him spoke:
"Thou alone, O Kumbha-karna, can the Raksha's honour save,
Strongest of the Raksha warriors, stoutest-hearted midst the brave,
Speed thee like the Dread Destroyer to the dark and dubious fray,
Cleave through Rama's girdling forces, chase the scattered foe away!"
Like a mountain's beetling turret Kumbha-karna stout and tall,
Passed the city's lofty portals and the city's girdling wall,
And he raised his voice in battle, sent his cry from shore to shore,
Solid mountains shook and trembled and the sea returned the roar!
INDRA nor the great VARUNA equalled Kumbha-karna's might,
Vanars trembled at the warrior, sought their safety in their flight,

[1] Javelin.

But the prince of fair Kishkindha, Angad chief of warlike fame,
Marked his panic-stricken forces with a princely warrior's shame.
"Wither fly, ye trembling Vanars?" thus the angry chieftain cried,
"All forgetful of your duty, of your worth and warlike pride,
Deem not stalwart Kumbha-karna is our match in open fight,
Forward let us meet in battle, let us crush his giant might!"
Rallied thus, the broken army stone and tree and massive rock,
Hurled upon the giant Raksha speeding with the lightning's shock,
Vain each flying rock and missile, vain each stout and sturdy stroke,
On the Raksha's limbs of iron stone and tree in splinters broke.
Dashing through the scattered forces Kumbha-karna fearless stood,
As a forest conflagration feasts upon the parchéd wood,
Far as confines of the ocean, to the causeway they had made,
To the woods or caves or billows, Vanars in their terror fled!
Hanuman of dauntless valour turned not in his fear nor fled,
Heaved a rock with mighty effort on the Raksha's towering head,
With his spear-head Kumbha-karna dashed the flying rock aside,
By the Raksha's weapon stricken Hanuman fell in his pride.
Next Rishabha and brave Nila and the bold Sarabha came,
Gavaksha and Gandha-madan, chieftains of a deathless fame,
But the spear of Kumbha-karna hurled to earth his feeble foes,
Dreadful was the field of carnage, loud the cry of battle rose!
Angad prince of fair Kishkindha, filled with anger and with shame,
Tore a rock with wrathful prowess, to the fatal combat came,
Short the combat, soon the Raksha caught and turned his foe around
Hurled him in his deadly fury, bleeding, senseless on the ground!
Last, Sugriva king of Vanars with a vengeful anger woke,
Tore a rock from bed of mountain and in proud defiance spoke,
Vain Sugriva's toil and struggle, Kumbha-karna hurled a rock,
Fell Sugriva crushed and senseless 'neath the missile's mighty shock!
Piercing through the Vanar forces, like a flame through forest wood,
Came the Raksha where in glory Lakshman calm and fearless stood,
Short their contest,—Kumbha-karna sought a greater, mightier foe,
To the young and dauntless Lakshman spake in accents soft and low:
"Dauntless prince and matchless warrior, fair Sumitra's gallant son,
Thou hast proved unrivalled prowess and unending glory won,
But I seek a mightier foeman, to thy elder let me go,
I would fight the royal Rama, or to die or slay my foe!"

"Victor proud!" said gallant Lakshman, "peerless in thy giant might,
Conquerer of great Immortals, Lakshman owns thy skill in fight,
Mightier foe than bright Immortals thou shalt meet in fatal war,
Death for thee in guise of Rama tarries yonder, not afar!"
Ill it fared with Kumbha-karna when he strove with Rama's might,
Men on earth nor Gods immortal conquered Rama in the fight,
Deadly arrows keen and flaming from the hero's weapon broke,
Kumbha-karna faint and bleeding felt his death at every stroke,
Last, an arrow pierced his armour, from his shoulders smote his head,
Kumbha-karna, lifeless, headless, rolled upon the gory bed,
Hurled unto the heaving ocean Kumbha-karna's body fell,
And as shaken by a tempest, mighty was the ocean's swell!

V Indrajit's Sacrifice and Second Battle

Still around beleaguered Lanka girdled Rama's living chain,
Raksha chieftain after chieftain strove to break the line in vain,
Sons of Ravan,—brave Narantak was by valiant Angad slain,
Trisiras and fierce Devantak, Hanuman slew on the plain,
Atikaya, tall of stature, was by gallant Lakshman killed,
Ravan wept for slaughtered princes, brave in war in weapons skilled.
"Shed no tears of sorrow, father!" Indrajit exclaimed in pride,
"While thy eldest son surviveth triumph dwells on Ravan's side,
Rama and that stripling Lakshman, I had left them in their gore,
Once again I seek their lifeblood,—they shall live to fight no more.
Hear my vow, O Lord of Rakshas! ere descends yon radiant sun,
Rama's days and gallant Lakshman's on this wide earth shall be done,
Witness INDRA and VIVASWAT, VISHNU great and RUDRA dire,
Witness Sun and Moon and Sadhyas, and the living God of Fire!"
Opened wide the gates of Lanka; in the spacious field of war,
Indrajit arranged his army, foot and horse and battle car,
Then with gifts and sacred *mantras* bent before the God of Fire,
And invoked celestial succour in the battle dread and dire.
With his offerings and his garlands, Indrajit with spices rare,
Worshipped holy VAISWA-NARA on the altar bright and fair,
Spear and mace were ranged in order, dart and bow and shining blade
Sacred fuel, blood-red garments, fragrant flowers were duly laid,
Head of goat as black as midnight offered then the warrior brave,
And the shooting tongue of red fire omens of a conquest gave,

Curling to the right and smokeless, red and bright as molten gold,
Tongue of flame received the offering of the hero true and bold!
Victory the sign betokens! Bow and dart and shining blade,
Sanctified by holy *mantras,* by the Fire the warrior laid,
Then with weapons consecrated, hid in mists as once before,
Indrajit on helpless foemen did his fatal arrows pour!
Fled the countless Vanar forces, panic-stricken, crushed and slain,
And the dead and dying warriors strewed the gory battle plain,
Then on Rama, and on Lakshman, from his dark and misty shroud,
Indrajit discharged his arrows bright as sunbeams through a cloud.
Scanning earth and bright sky vainly for his dark and hidden foe,
Rama to his brother Lakshman spake in grief and spake in woe:
"Once again that wily Raksha, slaying all our Vanar train,
From his dark and shadowy shelter doth on us his arrows rain,
By the grace of great SWAYAMBHU, Indrajit is lost to sight,
Useless is our human weapon 'gainst his gift of magic might,
If SWAYAMBHU wills it, Lakshman, we shall face these fatal darts,
We shall stand with dauntless patience, we shall die with dauntless hearts!"
Weaponless but calm and valiant, from the foeman's dart and spell
Patiently the princes suffered, fearlessly the heroes fell!

VI Indrajit's Third Battle and Fall

Healing herbs from distant mountains Hanuman in safety brought,
Rama rose and gallant Lakshman, once again their foemen sought.
And when night its sable mantle o'er the earth and ocean drew,
Forcing through the gates of Lanka to the frightened city flew!
Gallant sons of Kumbha-karna vainly fought to stem the tide,
Hanuman and brave Sugriva slew the brothers in their pride,
Makaraksha, shark-eyed warrior, vainly struggled with the foe,
Rama laid him pierced and lifeless by an arrow from his bow.
Indrajit arose in anger for his gallant kinsmen slayed,
In his arts and deep devices Sita's beauteous image made,
And he placed the form of beauty on his speeding battle car,
With his sword he smote the image in the gory field of war!
Rama heard the fatal message which his faithful Vanars gave,
And a deathlike trance and tremor fell upon the warrior brave,

But Bibhishan deep in wisdom to the anguished Rama came,
With his words of consolation spake of Rama's righteous dame:
"Trust me, Rama, trust thy comrade,—for I know our wily house,—
Indrajit slays not the woman whom his father seeks as spouse,
'Tis for Sita, impious Ravan meets thee on the battle-field,
Stakes his life and throne and empire, but thy Sita will not yield,
Deem not that the king of Rakshas will permit her blood be shed,
Indrajit slays not the woman whom his father seeks to wed!
'Twas an image of thy Sita, Indrajit hath cleft in twain,
While our army wails and sorrows,—he performs his rites again,
To the holy Nikumbhila, Indrajit in secret hies,
For the rights which yield him prowess, hide him in the cloudy skies.
Let young Lakshman seek the foeman ere his magic rites be done,—
Once the sacrifice completed, none can combat Ravan's son,—
Let young Lakshman speed through Lanka till his wily foe is found,
Slay the secret sacrificer on the sacrificial ground!"
Unto holy Nikumbhila, Lakshman with Bibhishan went
Bravest, choicest of the army, Rama with his brother sent,
Magic rites and sacrifices Indrajit had scarce begun,
When surprised by arméd foemen rose in anger Ravan's son!
"Art thou he," thus to Bibhishan, Indrajit in anger spake,
"Brother of my royal father, stealing thus my life to take,
Raksha born of Raksha parents, dost thou glory in this deed,
Traitor to thy king and kinsmen, false to us in direst need?
Scorn and pity fill my bosom thus to see thee leave thy kin,
Serving as a slave of foemen, stooping to a deed of sin,
For the slave who leaves his kindred, basely seeks the foeman's grace,
Meets destruction from the foeman after he destroys his race!"
"Untaught child of impure passions," thus Bibhishan answer made,
"Of my righteous worth unconscious bitter accents hast thou said,
Know, proud youth, that Truth and Virtue in my heart precedence take,
And we shun the impious kinsman as we shun the pois'nous snake!
Listen, youth! this earth no longer bears thy father's sin and strife,
Plunder of the righteous neighbour, passion for the neighbour's wife,
Earth and skies have doomed thy father for his sin-polluted reign,
Unto Gods his proud defiance and his wrongs to sons of men!
Listen more! this fated Lanka groans beneath her load of crime,
And shall perish in her folly by the ruthless hand of Time,

Thou shalt perish and thy father and this proud presumptuous state,
Lakshman meets thee, impious Raksha, by the stern decree of Fate!"
"Hast thou too forgot the lesson," Indrajit to Lakshman said,
"Twice in field of war unconscious thee with Rama have I laid,
Dost thou stealing like a serpent brave my yet unconquered might,
Perish, boy, in thy presumption, in this last and fatal fight!"
Spake the hero: "Like a coward hid beneath a mantling cloud,
Thou hast battled like a caitiff safe behind thy sheltering shroud,
Now I seek an open combat, time is none to prate or speak,
Boastful word is coward's weapon, weapons and thy arrows seek!"
Soon they mixed in dubious combat, fury fired each foeman's heart,
Either warrior felt his rival worthy of his bow and dart,
Lakshman with his hurtling arrows pierced the Raksha's golden mail,
Shattered by the Raksha's weapons Lakshman's useless armour fell,
Red with gore and dim in eyesight still the chiefs in fury fought,
Neither quailed before his foeman, pause nor grace nor mercy sought,
Till with more than human valour Lakshman drew his bow amain,
Slayed the Raksha's steeds and driver, severed too his bow in twain.
"If the great and godlike Rama is in faith and duty true,
Gods assist the cause of virtue!"—Lakshman uttered as he drew,
Fatal was the dart unerring,—Gods assist the true and bold,—
On the field of Nikumbhila, Lakshman's foeman headless rolled!

VII Ravan's Lament

"Quenched the light of Rakshas' valour!" so the message-bearer said,
"Lakshman with the deep Bibhishan hath thy son in battle slayed,
Fallen is our prince and hero and his day on earth is done,
In a brighter world, O monarch, lives thy brave, thy gallant son!"
Anguish filled the father's bosom and his fleeting senses failed,
Till to deeper sorrow wakened Lanka's monarch wept and wailed:
"Greatest of my gallant warriors, dearest to thy father's heart,
Victor over bright Immortals,—art thou slain by Lakshman's dart,
Noble prince whose peerless arrows could the peaks of Mandar stain,
And could daunt the Dread Destroyer,—art thou by a mortal slain?
But thy valour lends a radiance to elysium's sunny clime,
And thy bright name adds a lustre to the glorious rolls of time,
In the skies the bright Immortals lisp thy name with terror pale,
On the earth our maids and matrons mourn thy fall with piercing wail!

Hark! the voice of lamentation waking in the palace halls,
Like the voice of woe in forests when the forest monarch falls,
Hark! the wailing widowed princess, mother weeping for her son,
Leaving them in tears and anguish, Indrajit, where are thou gone?
Full of years,—so oft I pondered,—when the monarch Ravan dies,
Indrajit shall watch his bedside, Indrajit shall close his eyes,
But the course of nature changes, and the father weeps the son,
Youth is fallen, and the aged lives to fight the foe alone!"
Tears of sorrow, slow and silent, fell upon the monarch's breast,
Then a swelling rage and passion woke within his heaving chest,
Like the sun of scorching summer glowed his face in wrathful shame,
From his brow and rolling eyeballs issued sparks of living flame!
"Perish she!" exclaimed the monarch, "she-wolf Sita dies to-day,
Indrajit but cleft her image, Ravan will the woman slay!"
Followed by his trembling courtiers, regal robes and garments rent,
Ravan shaking in his passion to *Asoka's* garden went,
Maddened by his wrath and anguish, with his drawn and flaming sword,
Sought the shades where soft-eyed Sita silent sorrowed for her lord.
Woman's blood the royal sabre on that fatal day had stained,
But his true and faithful courtiers Ravan's wrathful hand restrained.
And the watchful Raksha females girdled round the sorrowing dame,
Flung them on the path of Ravan to withstand a deed of shame.
"Not against a woman, Ravan, mighty warriors raise their hand,
In the battle," spake the courtiers, "duty bids thee use thy brand,
Versed in *Vedas* and in learning, court not thus a caitiff's fate,
Woman's blood pollutes our valour, closes heaven's eternal gate!
Leave the woman in her sorrow, mount upon thy battle car,
Faithful to our king and leader we will wake the voice of war,
'Tis the fourteenth day auspicious of the dark and waning moon,
Glory waiteth thee in battle and thy vengeance cometh soon,
All-resistless in the contest slay thy foeman in his pride,
Seek as victor of the combat widowed Sita as thy bride!"
Slow and sullen, dark and silent, Ravan then his wrath restrained,
Vengeance on his son's destroyer deep within his bosom reigned!

VIII Ravan's Second Battle and Vengeance

Voice of woe and lamentation and the cry of woman's wail,
Issuing from the homes of Lanka did the monarch's ears assail,

And a mighty thought of vengeance waked within the monarch's heart,
And he heaved a sigh of anguish as he grasped his bow and dart:
"Arm each chief and gallant Raksha! be our sacred duty done,
Ravan seeks a fitting vengeance for his brave and noble son,
Mahodar and Virupaksha, Mahaparshwa warrior tall,
Arm! this fated day will witness Lakshman's or your monarch's fall!
Call to mind each slaughtered hero,—Khara, Dushan, slain in fight,
Kumbha-karna giant warrior, Indrajit of magic might,
Earth nor sky shall hide my foemen nor the ocean's heaving swell,
Scattered ranks of Rama's forces shall my speedy vengeance tell,
Be the red-earth strewn and covered with our countless foemen slain,
Hungry wolves and blood-beaked vultures feed upon the ghastly plain,
For his great and gallant brother, for his brave and beauteous son,
Ravan seeks a fitting vengeance, Rakshas be your duty done!"
House to house, in Lanka's city, Ravan's royal hest was heard,
Street and lane poured forth their warriors by a mighty passion stirred,
With the javelin and sabre, mace and club and axe and pike,
Sataghni[1] and *bhindipala*,[2] quoit and discus quick to strike.
And they formed the line of tuskers and the line of battle car,
Mule and camel fit for burden and the fiery steed of war,
Serried ranks of arméd soldiers shook the earth beneath their tread,
Horsemen that on wings of lightning o'er the field of battle spread.
Drum and conch and sounding trumpet waked the echoes of the sky,
Pataha[3] and loud *mridanga*[4] and the people's maddening cry,
Thundering through the gates of Lanka, Ravan's lofty chariot passed
Destined by his fortune, Ravan ne'er again those portals crost!
And the sun was dim and clouded and a sudden darkness fell,
Birds gave forth their boding voices and the earth confessed a spell,
Gouts of blood in rain descended, startled coursers turned to fly,
Vultures swooped upon the banner, jackals yelled their doleful cry,
Omens of a dark disaster mantled o'er the vale and rock,
And the ocean heaved in billows, nations felt the earthquake shock!
Darkly closed the fatal battle, sturdy Vanars fell in fight,
Warlike leaders of the Rakshas perished neath the foeman's might,
Mahodhar and Virupaksha were by bold Sugriva slain,
Crushed by Angad, Mahaparshwa slumbered lifeless on the plain.

[1] A weapon of war, supposed to kill a hundred men at one discharge.
[2] A weapon of war. [3] A drum. [4] A drum.

But with more than mortal valour Ravan swept the ranks of war,
Warriors fell beneath his prowess, fled before his mighty car,
Cleaving through the Vanar forces, filled with vengeance deep and dire,
Ravan marked the gallant Lakshman flaming like a crimson fire!
Like the tempest cloud of summer Ravan's wingéd courses flew,
But Bibhishan in his prowess soon the gallant charges slew,
Dashing from his useless chariot Ravan leaped upon the ground,
And his false and traitor brother by his dearest foeman found!
Wrathful Ravan marked Bibhishan battling by the foeman's side,
And he hurled his pond'rous weapon for to slay him in his pride.
Lakshman marked the mighty jav'lin as it winged its whizzing flight,
Cleft it in its onward passage, saved Bibhishan by his might!
Grimly smiled the angry Ravan gloating in his vengeful wrath,
Spake to young and dauntless Lakshman daring thus to cross his path:
"Welcome, Lakshman! thee I battle for thy deed of darkness done,
Face the anger of a father, cruel slayer of the son,
By thy skill and by thy valour, false Bibhishan thou hast saved,
Save thyself! Deep in this bosom is a cruel grief engraved!"
Father's grief and sad remembrance urged the lightning-wingéd dart,
Ravan's *Sakti* fell resistless on the senseless Lakshman's heart,
Wrathful Rama saw the combat and arose in godlike might,
Carless, steedless, wounded Ravan sought his safety in his flight.

IX Rama's Lament

"Art thou fallen," sorrowed Rama, "weary of this endless strife,
Lakshman, if thy days are ended, Rama recks not for his life,
Gone is Rama's wonted valour, weapons leave his nerveless hand,
Drop his bow and shining arrows, useless hangs his sheathéd brand!
Art thou fallen, gallant Lakshman, death and faintness on me creep,
Weary of this fatal contest let me by my brother sleep,
Weary of the strife and triumph, since my faithful friend is gone,
Rama follows in his footsteps and his task on earth is done!
Thou hast from the far Ayodhya, followed me in deepest wood,
In the thickest of the battle thou hast by thy elder stood,
Love of woman, love of comrade, trite is love of kith and kind,
Love like thine, true-hearted brother, not on earth we often find!
When Sumitra seeks thee, Lakshman, ever weeping for thy sake,
When she asks me of her hero, what reply shall Rama make,

What reply, when Bharat questions,—Where is he who went to wood,
Where is true and faithful Lakshman who beside his elder stood?
What great crime or fatal shadow darkens o'er my hapless life,
Victim to the sins of Rama sinless Lakshman falls in strife,
Best of brothers, best of warriors, wherefore thus unconscious lie,
Mother, wife, and brother wait thee, ope once more thy sleeping eye!"
Tara's father, wise Susena, gentle consolation lent,
Hanuman from distant mountains herbs of healing virtue rent,
And by loving Rama tended, Lakshman in his strength arose,
Stirred by thoughts of fatal vengeance Rama sought the flying foes.

X Celestial Arms and Chariot

Not in dastard terror Ravan sought his safety in his flight,
But to seek fresh steeds of battle ere he faced his foeman's might,
Harnessing his gallant coursers to a new and glorious car,
Sunlike in its radiant splendour, Ravan came once more to war.
Gods in wonder watched the contest of the more than mortal foes,
Ravan mighty in his vengeance, Rama lofty in his woes,
Gods in wonder marked the heroes, lion-like in jungle wood,
INDRA sent his arms and chariot where the human warrior stood!
"Speed, Matali," thus spake INDRA, *"speed thee with my heavenly car,*
Where on foot the righteous Rama meets his mounted foe in war,
Speed, for Ravan's days are ended, and his moments brief and few,
Rama strives for right and virtue,—Gods assist the brave and true!"
Brave Matali drove the chariot drawn by steeds like solar ray,
Where the true and righteous Rama sought his foe in fatal fray,
Shining arms and heavenly weapons he to lofty Rama gave,—
When the righteous strive and struggle, God assist the true and brave!
"Take this car," so said Matali, "which the helping Gods provide,
Rama, take these steeds celestial, INDRA's golden chariot ride,
Take this royal bow and quiver, wear this falchion dread and dire,
VISWA-KARMAN forged this armour in the flames of heavenly fire,
I shall be thy chariot driver and shall speed the thund'ring car,
Slay the sin-polluted Ravan in this last and fatal war!"
Rama mounted on the chariot clad in arms of heavenly sheen,
And he mingled in a contest mortal eyes have never seen!

XI Ravan's Third Battle and Fall

Gods and mortals watched the contest and the heroes of the war,
Ravan speeding on his chariot, Rama on the heavenly car,
And a fiercer form the warriors in their fiery frenzy wore,
And a deeper weight of hatred on their anguished bosoms bore,
Clouds of dread and deathful arrows hid the radiant face of sky,
Darker grew the day of combat, fiercer grew the contest high!
Pierced by Ravan's pointed weapons bleeding Rama owned no pain,
Rama's arrows keen and piercing sought his foeman's life in vain,
Long and dubious battle lasted, and with fury wilder fraught,
Wounded, faint, and still unyielding, blind with wrath the rivals fought,
Pike and club and mace and trident scaped from Ravan's vengeful hand,
Spear and arrows Rama wielded, and his bright and flaming brand!
Long and dubious battle lasted, shook the ocean, hill and dale,
Winds were hushed in voiceless terror and the livid sun was pale,
Still the dubious battle lasted, until Rama in his ire
Wielded BRAHMA's deathful weapon flaming with celestial fire!
Weapon which the Saint Agastya had unto the hero given,
Winged as lightning dart of INDRA, fatal as the bolt of heaven,
Wrapped in smoke and flaming flashes, speeding from the circled bow,
Pierced the iron heart of Ravan, laid the lifeless hero low,
And a cry of pain and terror from the Raksha ranks arose,
And a shout from joyous Vanars as they smote their fleeing foes!
Heavenly flowers in rain descended on the red and gory plain,
And from unseen harps and timbrels rose a soft celestial strain,
And the ocean heaved in gladness, brighter shone the sunlit sky,
Soft and cool the gentle zephyrs through the forest murmured by,
Sweetest scent and fragrant odours wafted from celestial trees,
Fell upon the earth and ocean, rode upon the laden breeze!
Voice of blessing from the bright sky fell on Raghu's valiant son,—
"Champion of the true and righteous! now thy noble task is done!"

XII Mandodari's Lament and the Funerals

"Hast thou fallen," wept in anguish Ravan's first and eldest bride,
Mandodari, slender-waisted, Queen of Lanka's state and pride,
"Hast thou fallen, king and consort, more than Gods in warlike might,
Slain by man, whom bright Immortals feared to face in dubious fight?

Not a man!—the Dark Destroyer came to thee in mortal form,
Or the heaven-traversing VISHNU, INDRA ruler of the storm,
Gods of sky in shape of Vanars helped the dark and cruel deed,
Girdling round the Discus-Wielder in the battle's direst need!
Well I knew,—when Khara, Dushan, were by Rama's prowess slain,
Rama was no earthly mortal, he who crossed the mighty main,
Well I knew,—when with his army he invested Lanka's gate,
Rama was no earthly mortal but the messenger of Fate,
And I prayed,—the faithful Sita might unto her consort go,
For 'tis writ that nations perish for a righteous woman's woe,
But for impious lust of woman,—all forgetful of thy wife,
Thou hast lost thy crown and kingdom, thou hast lost thy fated life!
Woe to me! the sad remembrance haunts my tortured bosom still,
Of our days on famed Kailasa or on Meru's golden hill,
Gone the days of joy and gladness, Mandodari's days are done,
Since her lord and king and husband from her dear embrace is gone!"
Sorely wept the Queen of Lanka; Rama, tender, tearful, true,
Bade the funeral rites and honours to a fallen foeman due,
And they heaped the wood of *Chandan* and the fragrant garland laid,
On the pyre they lifted Ravan in the richest robes arrayed,
Weeping queens and sorrowing Rakshas round their fallen leader stood,
Brahmans with their chaunted *mantras* piled the dry and scented wood,
Oil and cords and sacred offerings were upon the altar laid,
And a goat of inky darkness as a sacrifice was slayed.
Piously the good Bibhishan lighted Ravan's funeral pyre,
And the zephyrs gently blowing fanned the bright and blazing fire,
Slow and sad with due ablutions mourners left the funeral site,
Rama then unstrung his weapon, laid aside his arms of might.

BOOK XI RAJYA-ABHISHEKA

(*Rama's Return and Consecration*)

THE REAL EPIC ends with the war, and with Rama's happy return to Ayodhya. Sita proves her stainless virtue by an Ordeal of Fire, and returns with her lord and with Lakshman in an aërial car, which Ravan had won from the Gods, and which Bibhishan made over to Rama. Indian poets are never tired of descriptions of nature, and the poet of the Ramayana takes advantage of Rama's journey from Ceylon to Oudh to

give us a bird's-eye view of the whole continent of India, as well as to recapitulate the principal incidents of his great Epic.

The gathering of men at Ayodhya, the greetings to Rama, and his consecration by the Vedic bard Vasishtha, are among the most pleasing passages in the whole poem. And the happiness enjoyed by men during the reign of Rama—described in the last few couplets of this Book—is an article of belief and a living tradition in India to this day.

The portions translated in this Book form the whole or portions of Sections cxviii., cxx., cxxv., cxxix., and cxxx., of Book vi. of the original text.

I Ordeal by Fire

For she dwelt in Ravan's dwelling,—rumour clouds a woman's fame—
Righteous Rama's brow was clouded, saintly Sita spake in shame:
"Wherefore spake ye not, my Rama, if your bosom doubts my faith,
Dearer than a dark suspicion to a woman were her death!
Wherefore, Rama, with your token came your vassal o'er the wave,
To assist a fallen woman and a tainted wife to save,
Wherefore with your mighty forces crossed the ocean in your pride,
Risked your life in endless combats for a sin-polluted bride?
Hast thou, Rama, all forgotten?—Saintly Janak saw my birth,
Child of harvest-bearing furrow, Sita sprang from Mother Earth,
As a maiden true and stainless unto thee I gave my hand,
As a consort fond and faithful roved with thee from land to land!
But a woman pleadeth vainly when suspicion clouds her name,
Lakshman, if thou lov'st thy sister, light for me the funeral flame,
When the shadow of dishonour darkens o'er a woman's life,
Death alone is friend and refuge of a true and trustful wife,
When a righteous lord and husband turns his cold averted eyes,
Funeral flame dispels suspicion, honour lives when woman dies!"
Dark was Rama's gloomy visage and his lips were firmly sealed,
And his eye betrayed no weakness, word disclosed no thought concealed,
Silent heaved his heart in anguish, silent drooped his tortured head,
Lakshman with a throbbing bosom funeral pyre for Sita made,
And Videha's sinless daughter prayed unto the Gods above,
On her lord and wedded consort cast her dying looks of love!
"If in act and thought," she uttered, "I am true unto my name,
Witness of our sins and virtues, may this Fire protect my fame!

If a false and lying scandal brings a faithful woman shame,
Witness of our sins and virtues, may this Fire protect my fame!
If in lifelong loving duty I am free from sin and blame,
Witness of our sins and virtues, may this Fire protect my fame!"
Fearless in her faith and valour Sita stepped upon the pyre,
And her form of beauty vanished circled by the clasping fire,
And an anguish shook the people like the ocean tempest-tost,
Old and young and maid and matron wept for Sita true and lost,
For bedecked in golden splendour and in gems and rich attire,
Sita vanished in the red fire of the newly lighted pyre!
Rishis and the great *Gandharvas,* Gods who know each secret deed,
Witnessed Sita's high devotion and a woman's lofty creed,
And the earth by ocean girdled with its wealth of teeming life,
Witnessed deed of dauntless duty of a true and stainless wife!

II Woman's Truth Vindicated

Slow the red flames rolled asunder, God of Fire incarnate came,
Holding in his radiant bosom fair Videha's sinless dame,
Not a curl upon her tresses, not a blossom on her brow,
Not a fibre of her mantle did with tarnished lustre glow!
Witness of our sins and virtues, God of Fire incarnate spake,
Bade the sorrow-stricken Rama back his sinless wife to take:
"Ravan in his impious folly forced from thee thy faithful dame,
Guarded by her changeless virtue, Sita still remains the same,
Tempted oft by female Rakshas in the dark and dismal wood,
In her woe and in her sadness true to thee hath Sita stood,
Courted oft by royal Ravan in the forest far and lone,
True to wedded troth and virtue Sita thought of thee alone,
Pure is she in thought and action, pure and stainless, true and meek,
I, the witness of all actions, thus my sacred mandate speak!"
Rama's forehead was unclouded and a radiance lit his eye,
And his bosom heaved in gladness as he spake in accents high:
"Never from the time I saw her in her maiden days of youth,
Have I doubted Sita's virtue, Sita's fixed and changeless truth,
I have known her ever sinless,—let the world her virtue know,
For the God of Fire is witness to her truth and changeless vow!
Ravan in his pride and passion conquered not a woman's love,
For the virtuous like the bright fire in their native radiance move,

Ravan in his rage and folly conquered not a faithful wife,
For like ray of sun unsullied is a righteous woman's life,
Be the wide world now a witness,—pure and stainless is my dame,
Rama shall not leave his consort till he leaves his righteous fame!"
In his tears the contrite Rama clasped her in a soft embrace,
And the fond forgiving Sita in his bosom hid her face!

III Return Home by the Aërial Car

"Mark my love," so Rama uttered, as on flying Pushpa car,
Borne by swans, the home-returning exiles left the field of war,
"Lanka's proud and castled city on Trikuta's triple crest,
As on peak of bold Kailasa mansions of Immortals rest!
Mark the gory fields surrounding where the Vanars in their might,
Faced and fought the charging Rakshas in the long and deathful fight,
Indrajit and Kumbha-karna, Ravan and his chieftains slain,
Fell upon the field of battle and their red blood soaks the plain.
Mark where dark-eyed Mandodari, Ravan's slender-waisted wife,
Wept her widow's tears of anguish when her monarch lost his life,
She hath dried her tears of sorrow and bestowed her heart and hand,
On Bibhishan good and faithful, crownéd king of Lanka's land.
See my love, round Ceylon's island how the ocean billows roar,
Hiding pearls in caves of corals, strewing shells upon the shore,
And the causeway far-extending,—monument of Rama's fame,—
'Rama's Bridge' to distant ages shall our deathless deeds proclaim!
See the rockbound fair Kishkindha and her mountain-girdled town,
Where I slayed the warrior Bali, placed Sugriva on the throne,
And the hill of Rishyamuka where Sugriva first I met,
Gave him word,—he would be monarch ere the evening's sun had set.
See the sacred lake of Pampa by whose wild and echoing shore,
Rama poured his lamentations when he saw his wife no more,
And the woods of Janasthana where Jatayu fought and bled,
When the deep deceitful Ravan with my trusting Sita fled.
Dost thou mark, my soft-eyed Sita, cottage on the river's shore,
Where in righteous peace and penance Sita lived in days of yore,
And by gloomy Godavari, Saint Agastya's home of love,
Holy men by holy duties sanctify the sacred grove!
Dost thou, o'er the Dandak forest, view the Chitrakuta hill,
Deathless bard the Saint Valmiki haunts its shade and crystal rill,

Thither came the righteous Bharat and my loving mother came,
Longing in their hearts to take us to Ayodhya's town of fame,
Dost thou, dear devoted Sita, see the Jumna in her might,
Where in Bharad-waja's *asram* passed we, love, a happy night,
And the broad and ruddy Ganga sweeping in her regal pride,
Forest-dweller faithful Guha crossed us to the southern side.
Joy! joy! my gentle Sita! Fair Ayodhya looms above,
Ancient seat of Raghu's empire, nest of Rama's hope and love,
Bow, bow, to bright Ayodhya! Darksome did the exiles roam,
Now their weary toil is ended in their father's ancient home!"

IV Greetings

Message from returning Rama, Vanars to Ayodhya brought,
Righteous Bharat gave his mandate with a holy joy distraught:
"Let our city shrines and *chaityas*[1] with a lofty music shake,
And our priests to bright Immortals grateful gifts and offerings make,
Bards, reciters of *Puranas*,[2] minstrels versed in ancient song,
Women with their tuneful voices lays of sacred love prolong,
Let our queens and stately courtiers step in splendour and in state,
Chieftains with their marshalled forces range along the city gate,
And our white-robed holy Brahmans hymns and sacred *mantras* sing,
Offer greetings to our brother, render homage to our king!"
Brave Satrughna heard his elder and his mandate duly kept:
"Be our great and sacred city levelled, cleansed, and duly swept,
And the grateful earth be sprinkled with the water from the well,
Strewn with parchéd rice and offering and with flower of sweetest smell,
On each turret, tower, and temple let our flags and colours wave,
On the gates of proud Ayodhya plant Ayodhya's banners brave,
Gay festoons of flowering creeper home and street and dwelling line,
And in gold and glittering garment let the gladdened city shine!"
Elephants in golden trappings thousand chiefs and nobles bore,
Chariots, cars, and gallant chargers speeding by Sarayu's shore,
And the serried troops of battle marched with colours rich and brave,
Proudly o'er the gay procession did Ayodhya's banners wave.
In their stately gilded litters royal dames and damsels came,
Queen Kausalya first and foremost, Queen Sumitra rich in fame,

[1] Shrines or temples. [2] Sacred chronicles.

Pious priest and learned Brahman, chief of guild from near and far,
Noble chief and stately courtier with the wreath and water jar.
Girt by minstrel, bard, and herald chanting glorious deeds of yore,
Bharat came,—his elder's sandals still the faithful younger bore,—
Silver-white his proud umbrella, silver-white his garland brave,
Silver-white the fan of *chowri* which his faithful henchmen wave.
Stately march of gallant chargers and the roll of battle car,
Heavy tread of royal tuskers and the beat of drum of war,
Dundubhi[1] and echoing *sankha,* voice of nations gathered nigh,
Shook the city's tower and temple and the pealing vault of sky!
Sailing o'er the cloudless ether Rama's Pushpa chariot came,
And ten thousand jocund voices shouted Rama's joyous name,
Women with their loving greetings, children with their joyous cry,
Tottering age and lisping infant hailed the righteous chief and high.
Bharat lifted up his glances unto Rama from afar,
Unto Sita, unto Lakshman, seated on the Pushpa car,
And he wafted high his greetings and he poured his pious lay,
As one wafts the chaunted *mantra* to the rising God of Day!
Silver swans by Rama's bidding soft descended from the air,
And on earth the chariot lighted,—car of flowers divinely fair,—
Bharat mounting on the chariot, sought his long-lost elder's grace,
Rama held his faithful younger in a brother's dear embrace.
With his greetings unto Lakshman, unto Rama's faithful dame,
To Bibhishan and Sugriva and each chief who hither came,
Bharat took the jewelled sandals with the rarest gems inlaid,
Placed them at the feet of Rama and in humble accents said:
"Tokens of thy rule and empire, *these* have filled thy royal throne,
Faithful to his trust and duty Bharat renders back thine own,
Bharat's life is joy and gladness, for returned from distant shore,
Thou shalt rule thy spacious kingdom and thy loyal men once more,
Thou shalt hold thy rightful empire and assume thy royal crown,
Faithful to his trust and duty,—Bharat renders back thine own!"

V The Consecration

Joy! joy! in bright Ayodhya gladness filled the hearts of all,
Joy! joy! a lofty music sounded in the royal hall,

[1] Drum.

Fourteen years of woe were ended, Rama now assumed his own,
And they placed the weary wand'rer on his father's ancient throne,
And they brought the sacred water from each distant stream and hill,
From the vast and boundless ocean, from each far and sacred rill.
Vasishtha the Bard of *Vedas* with auspicious rites and meet
Placed the monarch and his consort on the gemmed and jewelled seat,
Gautama and Katyayana, Vamadeva priest of yore,
Jabali and wise Vijaya versed in holy ancient lore,
Poured the fresh and fragrant water on the consecrated king,
As the Gods anointed INDRA from the pure ethereal spring!
Vedic priests with sacred *mantra,* dark-eyed virgins with their song,
Warriors girt in arms and weapons round the crownéd monarch throng,
Juices from each fragrant creeper on his royal brow they place,
And his father's crown and jewels Rama's ample forehead grace,
And as Manu, first of monarchs, was enthroned in days of yore,
So was Rama consecrated by the priests of Vedic lore!
Brave Satrughna on his brother cast the white umbrella's shade
Bold Sugriva and Bibhishan waved the *chowri* gem-inlaid,
VAYU, God of gentle zephyrs, gift of golden garland lent,
INDRA, God of rain and sunshine, wreath of pearls to Rama sent,
Gay *Gandharvas* raised the music, fair *Apsaras*[1] formed the ring,
Men in nations hailed their Rama as their lord and righteous king!
And 'tis told by ancient sages, during Rama's happy reign,
Death untimely, dire diseases, came not to his subject men,
Widows wept not in their sorrow for their lords untimely lost,
Mothers wailed not in their anguish for their babes by YAMA *crost,*
Robbers, cheats, and gay deceivers tempted not with lying word,
Neighbour loved his righteous neighbour and the people loved their lord!
Trees their ample produce yielded as returning seasons went,
And the earth in grateful gladness never failing harvest lent,
Rains descended in their season, never came the blighting gale,
Rich in crop and rich in pasture was each soft and smiling vale,
Loom and anvil gave their produce and the tilled and fertile soil,
And the nation lived rejoicing in their old ancestral toil.

[1] Celestial nymph.

BOOK XII ASWA-MEDHA
(Sacrifice of the Horse)

THE REAL EPIC ends with Rama's happy return to Ayodhya. An *Uttara-Kanda* or Supplement is added, describing the fate of Sita, and giving the poem a sad ending.

The dark cloud of suspicion still hung on the fame of Sita, and the people of Ayodhya made reflections on the conduct of their king, who had taken back into his house a woman who had lived in the palace of Ravan. Rama gave way to the opinion of his people, and he sent away his loving and faithful Sita to live in forests once more.

Sita found an asylum in the hermitage of Valmiki, and reputed author of this Epic, and there gave birth to twins, Lava and Kusa. Years passed on, and Lava and Kusa grew up as hermit boys, and as pupils of Valmiki.

After years had passed, Rama performed a great Horse-sacrifice. Kings and princes were invited from neighbouring countries, and a great feast was held. Valmiki came to the sacrifice, and his pupils, Lava and Kusa, chanted there the great Epic, the *Ramayana,* describing the deeds of Rama. In this interesting portion of the poem we find how songs and poetry were handed down in ancient India by memory. The boys had learnt the whole of the Epic by heart, and chanted portions of it, day after day, till the recital was completed. We are told that the poem consists of seven books, 500 cantos, and 24,000 couplets. Twenty cantos were recited each day, so that the recital of the whole poem must have taken twenty-five days. It was by such feats of memory and by such recitals that literature was preserved in ancient times in India.

Rama recognised his sons in the boy-minstrels, and his heart yearned once more for Sita, whom he had banished but never forgotten. He asked the Poet Valmiki to restore his wife to him, and he desired that Sita might once more prove her purity in the great assembly, so that he might take her back with the approval of his people.

Sita came. But her life had been darkened by an unjust suspicion, her heart was broken, and she invoked the Earth to take her back. And the Earth, which had given Sita birth, yawned and took back her suffering child into her bosom.

In the ancient hymns of the *Rig Veda,* Sita is simply the goddess of the field-furrow which bears crops for men. We find how that simple conception is concealed in the *Ramayana,* where Sita the heroine of the Epic is still born of the field-furrow, and after all her adventures returns to

the Earth. To the millions of men and women in India, however, Sita is not an allegory; she lives in their hearts and affections as the model of womanly love, womanly devotion, and a wife's noble self-abnegation.

The portions translated in this Book form the whole or portions of Sections xcii., xciii., xciv., and xcvii. of Book vii. of the original text.

I The Sacrifice

Years have passed; the lonely Rama in his joyless palace reigned,
And for righteous duty yearning, *Aswa-medha*[1] rite ordained,
And a steed of darkest sable with the valiant Lakshman sent,
And with troops and faithful courtiers to Naimisha's forest went.
Fair was far Naimisha's forest by the limpid Gumti's shore,
Monarchs came and warlike chieftains, Brahmans versed in sacred lore,
Bharat with each friend and kinsman served them with the choicest food,
Proud retainers by each chieftain and each crownéd monarch stood.
Palaces and stately mansions were for royal guests assigned,
Peaceful homes for learnéd Brahmans were with trees umbrageous lined,
Gifts were made unto the needy, cloth by skilful weavers wrought,
Ere the suppliants spake their wishes, ere they shaped their inmost thought!
Rice unto the helpless widow, to the orphan wealth and gold,
Gifts they gave to holy Brahmans, shelter to the weak and old,
Garments to the grateful people crowding by their monarch's door,
Food and drink unto the hungry, home unto the orphan poor.
Ancient *rishis* had not witnessed feast like this in any land,
Bright Immortals in their bounty blest not with a kinder hand,
Through the year and circling seasons lasted Rama's sacred feast,
And the untold wealth of Rama by his kindly gifts increased!

II Valmiki and His Pupils

Foremost midst the gathered Sages to the holy *yajna*[2] came
Deathless Bard of Lay Immortal—Saint Valmiki rich in fame,
Midst the humble homes of *rishis,* on the confines of the wood,
Cottage of the Saint Valmiki in the shady garden stood.
Fruits and berries from the jungle, water from the crystal spring,
With a careful hand Valmiki did unto his cottage bring,

[1] Horse sacrifice. [2] Sacrifice.

And he spake to gentle Lava, Kusa child of righteous fame,—
Sita's sons, as youthful hermits to the sacred feast they came:
"Lift your voices, righteous pupils, and your richest music lend,
Sing the Lay of *Ramayana* from the first unto the end,
Sing it to the holy Brahman, to the warrior fair and tall,
In the crowded street and pathway, in the monarch's palace hall,
Sing it by the door of Rama,—he ordains this mighty feast,
Sing it to the royal ladies,—they shall to the story list,
Sing from day to day unwearied, in this sacrificial site,
Chant to all the gathered nations Rama's deeds of matchless might,
And this store of fruits and berries will allay your thirst and toil,
Gentle children of the forest, unknown strangers in this soil!
Twenty cantos of the Epic, morn to night, recite each day,
Till from end to end is chanted *Ramayana's* deathless Lay,
Ask no alms, receive no riches, nor of your misfortunes tell,
Useless unto us is bounty who in darksome forests dwell,
Children of the wood and mountain, cruel fortune clouds your birth,
Stainless virtue be your shelter, virtue be your wealth on earth!
If the royal Rama questions and your lineage seeks to know,
Say,—Valmiki is our Teacher and our Sire on earth below,
Wake your harps to notes of rapture and your softest accents lend,
With the music of the poet music of your voices blend,
Bow unto the mighty monarch, bow to Rama fair and tall,
He is father of his subjects, he is lord of creatures all!"

III Recital of the Ramayana

When the silent night was ended, and their pure ablutions done,
Joyous went the minstrel brothers, and their lofty lay begun,
Rama to the hermit minstrels lent a monarch's willing ear,
Blended with the simple music dulcet was the lay to hear,
And so sweet the chanted accents, Rama's inmost soul was stirred,
With his royal guests and courtiers still the deathless lay he heard!
Heralds versed in old *Puranas,* Brahmans skilled in pious rite,
Minstrels deep in lore of music, poets fired by heavenly might,
Watchers of the constellations, min'sters of the festive day,
Men of science and of logic, bards who sang the ancient lay,
Painters skilled and merry dancers who the festive joy prolong,
Hushed and silent in their wonder listed to the wondrous song!

And as poured the flood of music through the bright and livelong day,
Eyes and ears and hearts insatiate drank the nectar of the lay,
And the eager people whispered: "See the boys, how like our king
As two drops of limpid water from the parent bubble spring!
Were the boys no hermit-children, in the hermit's garments clad,
We would deem them Rama's image,—Rama as a youthful lad!"
Twenty cantos of the Epic thus the youthful minstrels sung,
And the voice of stringéd music through the Epic rolled along,
Out spake Rama in his wonder: "Scarce I know who these may be,
Eighteen thousand golden pieces be the children-minstrels' fee!"
"Not so," answered thus the children, "we in darksome forests dwell,
Gold and silver, bounteous monarch, forest life beseem not well!"
"Noble children!" uttered Rama, "dear to me the words you say,
Tell me who composed this Epic,—Father of this deathless Lay?"
"Saint Valmiki," spake the minstrels, "framed the great immortal song
Four and twenty thousand verses to this noble Lay belong,
Untold tales of deathless virtue sanctify his sacred line,
And five hundred glorious cantos in this glorious Epic shine,
In six Books of mighty splendour was the poet's task begun,
With a seventh Book, supplemental is the poet's labour done,
All thy matchless deeds, O monarch, in this Lay will brighter shine,
List to us from first to ending if thy royal heart incline!"
"Be it so," thus Rama answered, but the hours of day were o'er,
And Valmiki's youthful pupils to their cottage came once more.
Rama with his guests and courtiers slowly left the royal hall,
Eager was his heart to listen, eager were the monarchs all,
And the voice of song and music thus was lifted day to day,
And from day to day they listened to Valmiki's deathless Lay!

IV Lava and Kusa Recognised

Flashed upon the contrite Rama glimpses of the dawning truth,
And with tears of love paternal Rama clasped each minstrel youth,
Yearned his sorrow-stricken bosom for his pure and peerless dame,
Sita banished to the forest, stainless in her righteous fame!
In his tears repentant Rama to Valmiki message sent,
That his heart with eager longing sought her from her banishment:
"Pure in soul! before these monarchs may she yet her virtue prove,
Grace once more my throne and kingdom, share my unforgotten love,

Pure in soul! before my subjects may her truth and virtue shine,
Queen of Rama's heart and empire may she once again be mine!"

V Sita Lost

Morning dawned; and with Valmiki, Sita to the gathering came,
Banished wife and weeping mother, sorrow-stricken, suffering dame,
Pure in thought and deed, Valmiki gave his troth and plighted word,—
Faithful still the banished Sita in her bosom held her lord!
"Mighty Saint," so Rama answered as he bowed his humble head,
"Listening world will hear thy mandate and the word that thou hast said,
Never in his bosom Rama questioned Sita's faithful love,
And the God of Fire incarnate did her stainless virtue prove!
Pardon, if the voice of rumour drove me to a deed of shame,
Bowing to my people's wishes I disowned my sinless dame,
Pardon, if to please my subjects I have bade my Sita roam,
Tore her from my throne and empire, tore her from my heart and home!
In the dark and dreary forest was my Sita left to mourn,
In the lone and gloomy jungle were my royal children born,
Help me, Gods, to wipe this error and this deed of sinful pride,
May my Sita prove her virtue, be again my loving bride!"
Gods and Spirits, bright Immortals to that royal *Yajna* came,
Men of every race and nation, kings and chiefs of righteous fame,
Softly through the halls of splendour cool and scented breezes blew,
Fragrance of celestial blossoms o'er the royal chambers flew.
Sita saw the bright Celestials, monarchs gathered from afar,
Saw her royal lord and husband bright as heaven-ascending star,
Saw her sons as hermit-minstrels beaming with a radiance high,
Milk of love suffused her bosom, tear of sorrow filled her eye!
Rama's queen and Janak's daughter, will she stoop her cause to plead,
Witness of her truth and virtue can a loving woman need?
Oh! her woman's heart is bursting, and her day on earth is done,
And she pressed her heaving bosom, slow and sadly thus begun:
"If unstained in thought and action I have lived from day of birth,
Spare a daughter's shame and anguish and receive her, Mother Earth!
If in duty and devotion I have laboured undefiled,
Mother Earth! who bore this woman, once again receive thy child!
If in truth unto my husband I have proved a faithful wife,
Mother Earth! relieve thy Sita from the burden of this life!"

Then the earth was rent and parted, and a golden throne arose,
Held aloft by jewelled *Nagas* as the leaves enfold the rose,
And the Mother in embraces held her spotless sinless Child,
Saintly Janak's saintly daughter, pure and true and undefiled,
Gods and men proclaim her virtue! But fair Sita is no more,
Lone is Rama's loveless bosom and his days of bliss are o'er!

CONCLUSION

IN THE CONCLUDING PORTION of the *Uttara* or Supplemental Book, the descendants of Rama and his brothers are described as the founders of the great cities and kingdoms which flourished in Western India in the fourth and fifth centuries before the Christian Era.

Bharat had two sons, Taksha and Pushkala. The former founded Taksha-sila, to the east of the Indus, and known to Alexander and the Greeks as Taxila. The latter founded Pushkala-vati, to the west of the Indus, and known to Alexander and the Greeks as Peukelaotis. Thus the sons of Bharat are said to have founded kingdoms which flourished on either side of the Indus river in the fourth century before Christ.

Lakshman had two sons, Angada and Chandraketu. The former founded the kingdom of Karupada, and the latter founded the city of Chandrakanti in the Malwa country.

Satrughna had two sons, Suvahu and Satrughati. The former became king of Mathura, and the latter ruled in Vidisha.

Rama had two sons, Lava and Kusa. The former ruled in Sravasti, which was the capital of Oudh at the time of the Buddha in the fifth and sixth centuries before Christ. The latter founded Kusavati at the foot of the Vindhya mountains.

The death of Rama and his brothers was in accordance with Hindu ideas of the death of the righteous. Lakshman died under somewhat peculiar circumstances. A messenger from heaven sought a secret conference with Rama, and Rama placed Lakshman at the gate, with strict injunctions that whoever intruded on the private conference should be slain. Lakshman himself had to disturb the conference by the solicitation of the celestial *rishi* Durvasa, who always appears on earth to create mischief. And true to the orders passed by Rama, he surrendered his life by penances, and went to heaven.

In the fulness of time, Rama and his other brothers left Ayodhya, crossed the Sarayu, surrendered their mortal life and entered heaven.

INDIAN HUMOR

The Fables of Panchatantra

INTRODUCTION

INDIA IS THE HOME OF FABLES, which are usually associated in our minds with the Greek slave, mentioned by Herodotus, by the name of Aesop. Few users of allusions to Aesop's fables which have crept into our everyday language realize that these stories, their special form and technique, can be traced to very remote sources in India. Ernest Rhys, in his Introduction to *Fables, Aesop and Others* (Everyman's) justly remarks, "We have to admit that the beast-fable did not begin with him (Aesop), or in Greece at all. We have, in fact, to go East and to look to India and burrow in the 'tales within tales' of *Hitopadesa* to get an idea how old the antiquity of the fable actually is."

There are two outstanding collections of animal fables in Indian literature, the *Panchatantra* and the *Hitopadesa.* The first is the older and richer collection, consisting of 87 stories, the second, of 43, of which 25 are found in the *Panchatantra.* According to Dr. Hertel, the *Panchatantra* was probably written down in the second century B.C. in Kashmir, but the stories themselves are much older from evidences in Sanskrit works. It was the German Sanskrit scholar, Theodor Benfey, who translated the *Panchatantra* in 1859, and started the comparative study of beast fables, while the science of comparative philology had been started by the English pioneer of Sanskrit studies, Sir William Jones in 1789, and its foundation laid by Franz Bopp in 1816 through the comparison of Greek, Latin, Sanskrit, Celtic and Teutonic words. (Note that *Pancha* means "five," *Panchatantra* meaning "Five Sections"; cf. *Pentateuch.*) Curiously, a German version of these animal fables, made in 1481, was one of the earliest printed books in Europe, and an English version was among the books that came from Caxton's printing press. Also, the *Hito-*

padesa was one of the first printed Sanskrit books in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Sir Edwin Arnold translated the *Hitopadesa* (*Book of Good Counsels*) from the Sanskrit in 1861. On the other hand, the *Panchatantra* was not directly translated from the Sanskrit until 1924 by Stanley Rice,[1] and by Arthur W. Ryder in 1925.

While the indebtedness of Aesop to the Indian fables is open to question and can never be settled by conclusive evidence, the established route of migration of Indian fables into Europe has been interestingly described by Max Müller.[2] The stories from one of the collections of the *Panchatantra* (of which there are twenty-five recensions), were translated into Pahlawi (Pehlevi) in the sixth century. From the Persian, it was translated into Syriac in A.D. 570 (under the title *Kalilag and Damnag,* names of the jackals telling the stories, Tarataka and Damnaka), and into Arabic in the eighth century as the *Fables of Pilpay.* In this Arabic garb, it spread through the Islam world and reached Spain, Sicily, Provence and France, while through Constantinople, it reached Eastern Europe and was translated into Greek, Latin, German, Italian and English. In an English translation from the Italian it was probably known to Shakespeare. Such tales have inspired similar stories of *Boccaccio;* see *The Gullible Husband* and *The Butter-Blinded Brahman* in the present selection. La Fontaine, in the edition of his *Fables* published in 1678, says in the Preface, "It is not necessary that I should say whence I have taken the subjects of these new fables. I shall only say, from a sense of gratitude that I owe the largest portion of them to Pilpay the Indian Sage."[3]

The *Panchatantra* was therefore one of the most widely known and widely translated books of the world in the Middle Ages. As to the intriguing question of the origin of Aesop's fables, different views are possible and are held by different scholars. Max Müller believed that these fables found their way to Greece in or before Herodotus' time; others held the opposite; while still others believe in a common Aryan origin, or in independent origins. The question will probably never be settled. Rawlinson points out, however, "That the migration of fables was originally from East to West, and not vice versa, is shown by the

[1] Stanley Rice wrote in 1924 in his introduction to *Ancient Fables and Stories* (Wisdom of the East Series): "Indeed, a search in the British Museum and in the India Office libraries has failed to discover any English translation whatsoever."

[2] "On the Migration of Fables," in *Chips from a German Workshop,* vol. IV.

[3] Quoted by H. H. Gowen, *History of Indian Literature.*

fact that the animals and birds who play the leading parts, the lion, the jackal, the elephant, and the peacock, are mostly Indian ones. In the European versions the jackal becomes the fox: the relation between the lion and the jackal is a natural one, whereas that between the lion and the fox is not."[1] What seems to me common sense is that tigers, monkeys and crocodiles abound in Indian jungles and not in Greece. One cannot read Indian literature without being constantly impressed by the sense of the forest.

The important thing to point out is that the fables have had a too luxuriant growth in native Indian literature to permit of the theory of borrowed origins. With an apology for punning, one must say that the Hindu mind is fabulous. The genius for creating fables seems inexhaustible in Indian literature, while Aesop stood almost alone in Greece. Witness the *Buddhist Birth Stories* (the *Jatakas*),[2] and the *Dhammapada Commentary* by Buddhaghosha,[3] running each into four or five hundred stories, a great part of them animal fables, and the *Panchatantra* and the *Hitopadesa*. When one remembers also that many of the stories in the *Arabian Nights*, including that of the famous Sindbad the Sailor, are of Hindu origin, it is not easy to accept the view that such tales are not of native Indian growth.

Like the *Arabian Nights*, the *Panchatantra* uses a framework: that of a king despairing of teaching his two dull princes and finally engaging a wise Brahman who pledged to teach these two dull boys the complete *niti*, or wisdom of human intercourse, in six months, and who proceeded to teach these lessons on human nature through the fables, cleverly weaving one tale within another and very often making one character in the story start telling another story before one is completed.

The gift for moralizing that we see in *Aesop* exists in rather uncomfortable abundance. For it is quite clear that here the tale adorns the moral, rather than the moral adorns the tale. Many of these maxims are quotations from older books, like the *Vedas*, and some of them are extremely appropriate today. One might choose the following as the maxim for the present work and all folk literature:

All things that are seen or heard
In science or the Sacred Word,

[1] "India in European Thought and Literature" in *The Legacy of India*, Oxford.
[2] Translated by T. W. Rhys Davids, London, 1880.
[3] Translated by E. W. Burlingame, *Buddhist Legends*, in 3 vols. Harvard Oriental Series, Nos. 28, 29, 30.

The Panchatantra

Translated by Arthur W. Ryder

INTRODUCTION TO THE STORIES

IN THE SOUTHERN COUNTRY is a city called Maidens' Delight. There lived a king named Immortal-Power. He was familiar with all the works treating of the wise conduct of life. His feet were made dazzling by the tangle of rays of light from jewels in the diadems of mighty kings who knelt before him. He had reached the far shore of all the arts that embellish life. This king had three sons. Their names were Rich-Power, Fierce-Power, Endless-Power, and they were supreme blockheads.

Now when the king perceived that they were hostile to education, he summoned his counselors and said: "Gentlemen, it is known to you that these sons of mine, being hostile to education, are lacking in discernment. So when I behold them, my kingdom brings me no happiness, though all external thorns are drawn. For there is wisdom in the proverb:

> Of sons unborn, or dead, or fools,
> Unborn or dead will do:
> They cause a little grief, no doubt;
> But fools, a long life through.

And again:

> To what good purpose can a cow
> That brings no calf nor milk, be bent?
> Or why beget a son who proves
> A dunce and disobedient?

Some means must therefore be devised to awaken their intelligence."

And they, one after another, replied: "O King, first one learns grammar, in twelve years. If this subject has somehow been mastered, then

one masters the books on religion and practical life. Then the intelligence awakens."

But one of their number, a counselor named Keen, said: "O King, the duration of life is limited, and the verbal sciences require much time for mastery. Therefore let some kind of epitome be devised to wake their intelligence. There is a proverb that says:

Since verbal science has no final end,
Since life is short, and obstacles impend,
Let central facts be picked and firmly fixed,
As swans extract the milk with water mixed.

"Now there is a Brahman here named Vishnusharman,[1] with a reputation for competence in numerous sciences. Intrust the princes to him. He will certainly make them intelligent in a twinkling."

When the king had listened to this, he summoned Vishnusharman and said: "Holy sir, as a favor to me you must make these princes incomparable masters of the art of practical life. In return, I will bestow upon you a hundred land-grants."

And Vishnusharman made answer to the king: "O King, listen. Here is the plain truth. I am not the man to sell good learning for a hundred land-grants. But if I do not, in six months' time, make the boys acquainted with the art of intelligent living, I will give up my own name. Let us cut the matter short. Listen to my lion-roar. My boasting arises from no greed for cash. Besides, I have no use for money; I am eighty years old, and all the objects of sensual desire have lost their charm. But in order that your request may be granted, I will show a sporting spirit in reference to artistic matters. Make a note of the date. If I fail to render your sons, in six months' time, incomparable masters of the art of intelligent living, then His Majesty is at liberty to show me His Majestic bare bottom."

When the king, surrounded by his counselors, had listened to the Brahman's highly unconventional promise, he was penetrated with wonder, intrusted the princes to him, and experienced supreme content.

Meanwhile, Vishnusharman took the boys, went home, and made them learn by heart five books which he composed and called: (I) "The Loss of Friends," (II) "The Winning of Friends," (III) "Crows and Owls," (IV) "Loss of Gains," (V) "Ill-considered Action."

[1] It is possible that Vishnusharman was the real author of the book.

These the princes learned, and in six months' time they answered the prescription. Since that day this work on the art of intelligent living, called *Panchatantra,* or the "Five Books," has traveled the world, aiming at the awakening of intelligence in the young. To sum the matter up:

Whoever learns the work by heart,
Or through the story-teller's art
 Becomes acquainted,
His life by sad defeat—although
The king of heaven be his foe—
 Is never tainted.

THE FROGS THAT RODE SNAKEBACK

THERE WAS ONCE an elderly black snake in a certain spot, and his name was Slow-Poison. He considered the situation from this point of view: "How in the world can I get along without overtaxing my energies?" Then he went to a pond containing many frogs, and behaved as if very dejected.

As he waited thus, a frog came to the edge of the water and asked: "Uncle, why don't you bustle about today for food as usual?"

"My dear friend," said Slow-Poison, "I am afflicted. Why should I wish for food? For this evening, as I was bustling about for food, I saw a frog and made ready to catch him. But he saw me and, fearing death, he escaped among some Brahmans intent upon holy recitation, nor did I perceive which way he went. But in the water at the edge of the pond was the great toe of a Brahman boy, and stupidly deceived by its resemblance to a frog, I bit it, and the boy died immediately. Then the sorrowing father cursed me in these terms: 'Monster! Since you bit my harmless son, you shall for this sin become a vehicle for frogs, and shall subsist on whatever they choose to allow you.' Consequently, I have come here to serve as your vehicle."

Now the frog reported this to all the others. And every last one of them, in extreme delight, went and reported to the frog-king, whose name was Water-Foot. He in turn, accompanied by his counselors, rose hurriedly from the pond—for he thought it an extraordinary occurrence —and climbed upon Slow-Poison's hood. The others also, in order of age, climbed on his back. Yet others, finding no vacant spot, hopped along behind the snake. Now Slow-Poison, with an eye to making his

living, showed them fancy turns in great variety. And Water-Foot, enjoying contact with his body, said to him:

I'd rather ride Slow-Poison than
The finest horse I've seen,
Or elephant, or chariot,
Or man-borne palanquin.

The next day, Slow-Poison was wily enough to move very slowly. So Water-Foot said: "My dear Slow-Poison, why don't you carry us nicely, as you did before?"

And Slow-Poison said: "O King, I have no carrying power today because of lack of food." My dear fellow," said the king, "eat the plebeian frogs."

When Slow-Poison heard this, he quivered with joy in every member and made haste to say: "Why, that is a part of the curse laid on me by the Brahman. For that reason I am greatly pleased at your command." So he ate frogs uninterruptedly, and in a very few days he grew strong. And with delight and inner laughter he said:

The trick was good. All sorts of frogs
Within my power have passed.
The only question that remains,
Is: How long will they last?

Water-Foot, for his part, was befooled by Slow-Poison's plausibilities, and did not notice a thing.

THE UNFORGIVING MONKEY

IN A CERTAIN CITY was a king named Moon, who had a pack of monkeys for his son's amusement. They were kept in prime condition by daily provender and pabulum in great variety.

For the amusement of the same prince there was a herd of rams. One of them had an itching tongue, so he went into the kitchen at all hours of the day and night and swallowed everything in sight. And the cooks would beat him with any stick or other object within reach.

Now when the chief of the monkeys observed this, he reflected: "Dear me! This quarrel between ram and cooks will mean the destruction of the monkeys. For the ram is a regular guzzler, and when the cooks are infuriated, they hit him with anything handy. Suppose some time

they find nothing else and beat him with a firebrand. Then that broad, woolly back will very easily catch fire. And if the ram, while burning, plunges into the stable near by, it will blaze—for it is mostly thatch—and the horses will be scorched. Now the standard work on veterinary science prescribes monkey-fat to relieve burns on horses. This being so, we are threatened with death."

Having reached this conclusion, he assembled the monkeys and said:

"A quarrel of the ram and cooks
Has lately come about;
It threatens every monkey life
Without a shade of doubt.

"Because, if senseless quarrels rend
A house from day to day,
The folk who wish to keep alive
Had better move away.

"Therefore let us leave the house and take to the woods before we are all dead."

But the conceited monkeys laughed at his warning and said: "Oho! You are old and your mind is slipping. Your words prove it. We have no intention of foregoing the heavenly dainties which the princes give us with their own hands, in order to eat fruits peppery, puckery, bitter, and sour from the trees out there in the forest."

Having listened to this, the monkey chief made a wry face and said: "Come, come! You are fools. You do not consider the outcome of this pleasant life. Just at present it is sweet, at the last it will turn to poison. At any rate, I will not behold the death of my household. I am off for that very forest."

With these words the chief left them all behind, and went to the forest.

One day after he had gone, the ram entered the kitchen. And the cook, finding nothing else, picked up a firebrand, half-consumed and still blazing, and struck him. Whereat, with half his body blazing, he plunged bleating into the stable near by. There he rolled until flames started up on all sides—for the stable was mostly thatch—and of the horses tethered there some died, their eyes popping, while some, half-burned to death and whinnying with pain, snapped their halters, so that nobody knew what to do.

In this state of affairs, the saddened king assembled the veterinary

surgeons and said: "Prescribe some method of giving these horses relief from the pain of their burns." And they, recalling the teachings of their science, prescribed for this emergency the remedy of applying monkey-fat.

When the king heard this, he ordered the slaughter of the monkeys. And, not to waste words, every one was killed.

Now the monkey chief did not with his own eyes see this outrage perpetrated on his household. But he heard the story as it passed from one to another, and did not take it tamely. As the proverb says:

If foes commit an outrage on
A house, and one forgives—
Be it from fear or greed—he is
The meanest man that lives.

Now as the elderly monkey wandered about thirsty, he came to a lake made lovely by clusters of lotuses. And as he observed it narrowly, he noticed footprints leading into the lake, but none coming out. Thereupon he reflected: "There must be some vicious beast here in the water. So I will stay at a safe distance and drink through a hollow lotus-stalk."

When he had done so, there issued from the water a man-eating fiend with a pearl necklace adorning his neck, who spoke and said: "Sir, I eat everyone who enters the water. So there is none shrewder than you, who drink in this fashion. I have taken a liking to you. Name your heart's desire."

"Sir," said the monkey, "how many can you eat?" And the fiend replied: "I can eat hundreds, thousands, myriads, yes, hundreds of thousands, if they enter the water. Outside, a jackal can overpower me."

"And I," said the monkey, "I live in mortal enmity with a king. If you will give me that pearl necklace, I will awaken his greed with a plausible narrative, and will make that king enter the lake along with his retinue." So the fiend handed over the pearl necklace.

Then people saw the monkey roaming over trees and palace-roofs with a pearl necklace embellishing his throat, and they asked him: "Well, chief, where have you spent this long time? Where did you get a pearl necklace like that? Its dazzling beauty dims the very sun."

And the monkey answered: "In a spot in the forest is a shrewdly hidden lake, a creation of the god of wealth. Through his grace, if anyone bathes there at sunrise on Sunday, he comes out with a pearl necklace like this embellishing his throat."

Now the king heard this from somebody, summoned the monkey, and asked: "Is this true, chief?" "O King," said the monkey, "you have visible proof in the pearl necklace on my throat. If you, too, could find a use for one, send somebody with me, and I will show him."

On hearing this, the king said: "In view of the facts, I will come myself with my retinue, so that we may acquire numbers of pearl necklaces." "O King," said the monkey, "your idea is delicious."

So the king and his retinue started, greedy for pearl necklaces. And the king in his palanquin clasped the monkey to his bosom, showing him honor as they traveled. For there is wisdom in the saying:

> The hair grows old with aging years;
> The teeth grow old, the eyes and ears.
> But while the aging seasons speed,
> One thing is young forever—greed.

At dawn they reached the lake and the monkey said to the king: "O King, fulfilment comes to those who enter at sunrise. Let all your attendants be told, so that they may dash in with one fell swoop. You, however, must enter with me, for I will pick the place I found before and show you plenty of pearl necklaces." So all the attendants entered and were eaten by the fiend.

Then, as they lingered, the king said to monkey: "Well, chief, why do my attendants linger?" And the monkey hurriedly climbed a tree before saying to the king: "You villainous king, your attendants are eaten by a fiend that lives in the water. My enmity with you, arising from the death of my household, has been brought to a happy termination. Now go. I did not make you enter there, because I remembered that you were the king. Thus you plotted the death of my household, and I of yours."

When the king heard this, he hastened home, grief-stricken.

THE LION-MAKERS

IN A CERTAIN TOWN were four Brahmans who lived in friendship. Three of them had reached the far shore of all scholarship, but lacked sense. The other found scholarship distasteful; he had nothing but sense.

One day they met for consultation. "What is the use of attainments," said they, "if one does not travel, win the favor of kings, and acquire money? Whatever we do, let us all travel."

But when they had gone a little way, the eldest of them said: "One of us, the fourth, is a dullard, having nothing but sense. Now nobody gains the favorable attention of kings by simple sense without scholarship. Therefore we will not share our earnings with him. Let him turn back and go home."

Then the second said: "My intelligent friend, you lack scholarship. Please go home." But the third said: "No, no. This is no way to behave. For we have played together since we were little boys. Come along, my noble friend. You shall have a share of the money we earn."

With this agreement they continued their journey, and in a forest they found the bones of a dead lion. Thereupon one of them said: "A good opportunity to test the ripeness of our scholarship. Here lies some kind of creature, dead. Let us bring it to life by means of the scholarship we have honestly won."

Then the first said: "I know how to assemble the skeleton." The second said: "I can supply skin, flesh, and blood." The third said: "I can give it life."

So the first assembled the skeleton, the second provided skin, flesh, and blood. But while the third was intent on giving the breath of life, the man of sense advised against it, remarking: "This is a lion. If you bring him to life, he will kill every one of us."

"You simpleton!" said the other, "it is not I who will reduce scholarship to a nullity." "In that case," came the reply, "wait a moment, while I climb this convenient tree."

When this had been done, the lion was brought to life, rose up, and killed all three. But the man of sense, after the lion had gone elsewhere, climbed down and went home.

"And that is why I say:

Scholarship is less than sense;
Therefore seek intelligence:
Senseless scholars in their pride
Made a lion; then they died."

MOUSE-MAID MADE MOUSE

THE BILLOWS of the Ganges were dotted with pearly foam born of the leaping of fishes frightened at hearing the roar of the waters that broke on the rugged, rocky shore. On the bank was a hermitage crowded with

holy men devoting their time to the performance of sacred rites—chanting, self-denial, self-torture, study, fasting, and sacrifice. They would take purified water only, and that in measured sips. Their bodies wasted under a diet of bulbs, roots, fruits, and moss. A loin-cloth made of bark formed their scanty raiment.

The father of the hermitage was named Yajnavalkya. After he had bathed in the sacred stream and had begun to rinse his mouth, a little female mouse dropped from a hawk's beak and fell into his hand. When he saw what she was, he laid her on a banyan leaf, repeated his bath and mouth-rinsing, and performed a ceremony of purification. Then through the magic power of his holiness, he changed her into a girl, and took her with him to his hermitage.

As his wife was childless, he said to her: "Take her, my dear wife. She has come into life as your daughter, and you must rear her carefully." So the wife reared her and spoiled her with petting. As soon as the girl reached the age of twelve, the mother saw that she was ready for marriage, and said to her husband: "My dear husband, how can you fail to see that the time is passing when your daughter should marry?"

And he replied: "You are quite right, my dear. The saying goes:

For if she bides a maiden still,
She gives herself to whom she will;
Then marry her in tender age:
So warns the heaven-begotten sage.

If she, unwed, unpurified,
Too long within the home abide,
She may no longer married be:
A miserable spinster, she.

A father then, avoiding sin,
Weds her, the appointed time within
(Where'er a husband may be had)
To good, indifferent, or bad.

Now I will try to give her to one of her own station. You know the saying:

Where wealth is very much the same,
And similar the family fame,
Marriage (or friendship) is secure;
But not between the rich and poor.

"But

Get money, good looks,
And knowledge of books,
Good family, youth,
Position, and truth.

"So, if she is willing, I will summon the blessèd sun, and give her to him." "I see no harm in that," said his wife. "Let it be done."

The holy man therefore summoned the sun, who appeared without delay, and said: "Holy sir, why am I summoned?" The father said: "Here is a daughter of mine. Be kind enough to marry her." Then, turning to his daughter, he said: "Little girl, how do you like him, this blessèd lamp of the three worlds?" "No, father," said the girl. "He is too burning hot. I could not like him. Please summon another one, more excellent than he is."

Upon hearing this, the holy man said to the sun: "Blessèd one, is there any superior to you?" And the sun replied: "Yes, the cloud is superior even to me. When he covers me, I disappear."

So the holy man summoned the cloud next, and said to the maiden: "Little girl, I will give you to him." "No," said she. "This one is black and frigid. Give me to someone finer than he."

Then the holy man asked: "O cloud, is there anyone superior to you?" And the cloud replied: "The wind is superior even to me."

So he summoned the wind, and said: "Little girl, I give you to him." "Father," said she, "this one is too fidgety. Please invite somebody superior even to him." So the holy man said: "O wind, is there anyone superior even to you?" "Yes," said the wind. "The mountain is superior to me."

So he summoned the mountain and said to the maiden: "Little girl, I give you to him." "Oh, father," said she. "He is rough all over, and stiff. Please give me to somebody else."

So the holy man asked: "O kingly mountain, is there anyone superior even to you?" "Yes," said the mountain. "Mice are superior to me." [1]

Then the holy man summoned a mouse, and presented him to the little girl, saying: "Little girl, do you like this mouse?"

The moment she saw him, she felt: "My own kind, my own kind," and her body thrilled and quivered, and she said: "Father dear, turn me into a mouse, and give me to him. Then I can keep house as my kind of people ought to do."

[1] Because mice bore holes in the mountain sides.

And her father, through the magic power of his holiness, turned her into a mouse, and gave her to him.

"And that is why I say:

Though mountain, sun, and cloud, and wind
Were suitors at her feet,
The mouse-maid turned a mouse again—
Nature is hard to beat."

THE DUEL BETWEEN ELEPHANT AND SPARROW

IN A DENSE bit of jungle lived a sparrow and his wife, who had built their nest on the branch of a tamal tree, and in course of time a family appeared.

Now one day a jungle elephant with the spring fever was distressed by the heat, and came beneath that tamal tree in search of shade. Blinded by his fever, he pulled with the tip of his trunk at the branch where the sparrows had their nest, and broke it. In the process the sparrows' eggs were crushed, though the parent-birds—further life being predestined—barely escaped death.

Then the hen-sparrow lamented, desolate with grief at the death of her chicks. And presently, hearing her lamentation, a woodpecker bird, a great friend of hers, came grieved at her grief, and said: "My dear friend, why lament in vain? For the Scripture says:

For lost and dead and past
The wise have no laments:
Between the wise and fools
Is just this difference."

"That is good doctrine," said the hen-sparrow, "but what of it? This elephant—curse his spring fever!—killed my babies. So if you are my friend, think of some plan to kill this big elephant. If that were done, I should feel less grief at the death of my children."

"Madam," said the woodpecker, "your remark is very true. For the proverb says:

A friend in need is a friend indeed,
Although of different caste;
The whole world is your eager friend
So long as riches last.

"Now see what my wit can devise. But you must know that I, too, have a friend, a gnat called Lute-Buzz. I will return with her, so that this villainous beast of an elephant may be killed."

So he went with the hen-sparrow, found the gnat, and said: "Dear madam, this is my friend the hen-sparrow. She is mourning because a villainous elephant smashed her eggs. So you must lend your assistance while I work out a plan for killing him."

"My good friend," said the gnat, "there is only one possible answer. But I also have a very intimate friend, a frog named Cloud-Messenger. Let us do the right thing by calling him into consultation."

So all three went together and told Cloud-Messenger the entire story. And the frog said: "How feeble a thing is that wretched elephant when pitted against a great throng enraged! Gnat, you must go and buzz in his fevered ear, so that he may shut his eyes in delight at hearing your music. Then the woodpecker's bill will peck out his eyes. After that I will sit on the edge of a pit and croak. And he, being thirsty, will hear me, and will approach expecting to find a body of water. When he comes to the pit, he will fall in and perish."

When they carried out the plan, the fevered elephant shut his eyes in delight at the song of the gnat, was blinded by the woodpecker, wandered thirst-smitten at noonday, followed the croak of a frog, came to a great pit, fell in, and died.

"And that is why I say:

Woodpecker and sparrow,
With froggy and gnat,
Attacking *en masse,* laid
The elephant flat."

THE HERON THAT LIKED CRABMEAT

THERE WAS ONCE a heron in a certain place on the edge of a pond. Being old, he sought an easy way of catching fish on which to live. He began by lingering at the edge of his pond, pretending to be quite irresolute, not eating even the fish within his reach.

Now among the fish lived a crab. He drew near and said: "Uncle, why do you neglect today your usual meals and amusements?" And the heron replied: "So long as I kept fat and flourishing by eating fish, I spent my time pleasantly, enjoying the taste of you. But a great dis-

aster will soon befall you. And as I am old, this will cut short the pleasant course of my life. For this reason I feel depressed."

"Uncle," said the crab, "of what nature is the disaster?" And the heron continued: "Today I overheard the talk of a number of fishermen as they passed near the pond. 'This is a big pond,' they were saying, 'full of fish. We will try a cast of the net tomorrow or the day after. But today we will go to the lake near the city.' This being so, you are lost, my food supply is cut off, I too am lost, and in grief at the thought, I am indifferent to food today."

Now when the water-dwellers heard the trickster's report, they all feared for their lives and implored the heron, saying: "Uncle! Father! Brother! Friend! Thinker! Since you are informed of the calamity, you also know the remedy. Pray save us from the jaws of this death."

Then the heron said: "I am a bird, not competent to contend with men. This, however, I can do. I can transfer you from this pond to another, a bottomless one." By this artful speech they were so led astray that they said: "Uncle! Friend! Unselfish kinsman! Take me first! Me first! Did you never hear this?

> Stout hearts delight to pay the price
> Of merciful self-sacrifice,
> Count life as nothing, if it end
> In gentle service to a friend."

Then the old rascal laughed in his heart, and took counsel with his mind, thus: "My shrewdness has brought these fishes into my power. They ought to be eaten very comfortably." Having thus thought it through, he promised what the thronging fish implored, lifted some in his bill, carried them a certain distance to a slab of stone, and ate them there. Day after day he made the trip with supreme delight and satisfaction, and meeting the fish, kept their confidence by ever new inventions.

One day the crab, disturbed by the fear of death, importuned him with the words: "Uncle, pray save me, too, from the jaws of death." And the heron reflected: "I am quite tired of this unvarying fish diet. I should like to taste him. He is different, and choice." So he picked up the crab and flew through the air.

But since he avoided all bodies of water and seemed planning to alight on the sun-scorched rock, the crab asked him: "Uncle, where is that pond without any bottom?" And the heron laughed and said:

"Do you see that broad, sun-scorched rock? All the water-dwellers have found repose there. Your turn has now come to find repose."

Then the crab looked down and saw a great rock of sacrifice, made horrible by heaps of fish-skeletons. And he thought: "Ah me!

If you will, with serpents play;
Dwell with foemen who betray:
Shun your false and foolish friends,
Fickle, seeking vicious ends.

Why, he has already eaten these fish whose skeletons are scattered in heaps. So what might be an opportune course of action for me? Yet why do I need to consider?

Fear fearful things, while yet
No fearful thing appears;
When danger must be met,
Strike, and forget your fears.

So, before he drops me there, I will catch his neck with all four claws."

When he did so, the heron tried to escape, but being a fool, he found no parry to the grip of the crab's nippers, and had his head cut off.

Then the crab painfully made his way back to the pond, dragging the heron's neck as if it had been a lotus-stalk. And when he came among the fish, they said: "Brother, why come back?" Thereupon he showed the head as his credentials and said: "He enticed the water-dwellers from every quarter, deceived them with his prevarications, dropped them on a slab of rock not far away, and ate them. But I—further life being predestined—perceived that he destroyed the trustful, and I have brought back his neck. Forget your worries. All the water-dwellers shall live in peace."

THE UNTEACHABLE MONKEY

In a part of a forest was a troop of monkeys who found a firefly one winter evening when they were dreadfully depressed. On examining the insect, they believed it to be fire, so lifted it with care, covered it with dry grass and leaves, thrust forward their arms, sides, stomachs, and chests, scratched themselves, and enjoyed imagining that they were warm. One of the arboreal creatures in particular, being especially chilly, blew repeatedly and with concentrated attention on the firefly.

Thereupon a bird named Needle-Face, driven by hostile fate to her own destruction, flew down from her tree and said to the monkey: "My dear sir, do not put yourself to unnecessary trouble. This is not fire. This is a firefly." He, however, did not heed her warning but blew again, nor did he stop when she tried more than once to check him. To cut a long story short, when she vexed him by coming close and shouting in his ear, he seized her and dashed her on a rock, crushing face, eyes, head, and neck so that she died.

"And that is why I say:

No knife prevails against a stone;
Nor bends the unbending tree;
No good advice from Needle-Face
Helped indocility."

THE BRAHMAN'S GOAT

IN A CERTAIN TOWN lived a Brahman named Friendly who had undertaken the labor of maintaining the sacred fire. One day in the month of February, when a gentle breeze was blowing, when the sky was veiled in clouds and a drizzling rain was falling, he went to another village to beg a victim for the sacrifice, and said to a certain man: "O sacrificer, I wish to make an offering on the approaching day of the new moon. Pray give me a victim." And the man gave him a plump goat, as prescribed in Scripture. This he put through its paces, found it sound, placed it on his shoulder, and started in haste for his own city.

Now on the road he was met by three rogues whose throats were pinched with hunger. These, spying the plump creature on his shoulder, whispered together: "Come now! If we could eat that creature, we should have the laugh on this sleety weather. Let us fool him, get the goat, and ward off the cold."

So the first of them changed his dress, issued from a by-path to meet the Brahman, and thus addressed that man of pious life: "O pious Brahman, why are you doing a thing so unconventional and so ridiculous? You are carrying an unclean animal, a dog, on your shoulder.

At that the Brahman was mastered by anger, and he said: "Are you blind, man, that you impute doghood to a goat?" "O Brahman," said the rogue, "do not be angry. Go whither you will."

But when he had traveled a little farther, the second rogue met him and said: "Alas, holy sir, alas! Even if this dead calf was a pet, still you should not put it on your shoulder."

Then the Brahman spoke in anger: "Are you blind, man? You call a goat a calf." And the rogue said: "Holy sir, do not be angry. I spoke in ignorance. Do as you will."

But when he had walked only a little farther through the forest, the third rogue, changing his dress, met him and said: "Sir, this is most improper. You are carrying a donkey on your shoulder. Pray drop this thing, before another sees you."

So the Brahman concluded that it was a goblin in quadruped form, threw it on the ground, and made for home, terrified. Meanwhile, the three rogues met, caught the goat, and carried out their plan.

"And that is why I say:

The strong, deft, clever rascals note,
Who robbed the Brahman of his goat."

"Moreover, there is sound sense in this:

Is any man uncheated by
New servants' diligence,
The praise of guests, the maiden's tears,
And roguish eloquence?

Furthermore, one should avoid a quarrel with a crowd, though the individuals be weak. As the verse puts it:

Beware the populace enraged;
A crowd's a fearsome thing:
The ants devoured the giant snake
For all his quivering."

THE SNAKE IN THE PRINCE'S BELLY

IN A CERTAIN CITY DWELT A KING whose name was Godlike. He had a son who wasted daily in every limb because of a snake that used his belly as a home instead of an ant-hill. So the prince became dejected and went to another country. In a city of that country he begged alms, spending his time in a great temple.

Now in that city was a king named Gift, who had two daughters in early womanhood. One of these bowed daily at her father's feet with the greeting: "Victory, O King," while the other said: "Your deserts, O King."

At this the king grew very angry, and said: "See, counselors. This young lady speaks malevolently. Give her to some foreigner. Let her have her own deserts." To this the counselors agreed, and gave the princess, with very few maid-servants, to the prince who made his home in the temple.

And she was delighted, accepted her husband like a god, and went with him to a far country. There by the edge of a tank in a distant city she left the prince to look after the house while she went with her maids to buy butter, oil, salt, rice, and other supplies. When her shopping was done, she returned and found the prince with his head resting on an ant-hill. And from his mouth issued the head of a hooded snake, taking the air. Likewise another snake crawled from the ant-hill, also to take the air.

When these two saw each other, their eyes grew red with anger, and the ant-hill snake said: "You villain! How can you torment in this way a prince who is so perfectly handsome?" And the snake in the prince's mouth said: "Villain yourself! How can you bemire those two pots full of gold?" In this fashion each laid bare the other's weakness.

Then the ant-hill snake continued: "You villain! Doesn't anybody know the simple remedy of drinking black mustard and so destroying you?" And the belly-snake retorted: "And doesn't anybody know the simple way to destroy you, by pouring in hot water?"

Now the princess, hiding behind a branch, overheard their conversation, and did just as they suggested. So she made her husband sound and well, and acquired vast wealth. When she returned to her own country, she was highly honored by father, mother, and relatives, and lived happily. For she had her deserts.

"And that is why I say:

Be quick with mutual defense
In honest give-and-take;
Or perish like the ant-hill beast
And like the belly-snake."

THE GULLIBLE HUSBAND

THERE WAS ONCE A CARPENTER in a certain village. His wife was a whore, and reputed to be such. So he, desiring to test her, thought: "How can I put her to the test? For the proverb says:

> Fire chills, rogues bless, and moonlight burns
> Before a wife to virtue turns.

"Now I know from popular gossip that she is unfaithful. For the saying goes:

> All things that are not seen or heard
> In science or the Sacred Word,
> All things in interstellar space
> Are known among the populace."

After these reflections, he said to his wife: "Tomorrow morning, my dear, I am going to another village, where I shall be detained several days. Please put me up a nice lunch." And her heart quivered when she heard this; she eagerly dropped everything to make delicious dishes, almost pure butter and sugar. In fact, the old saw was justified:

> When lowering clouds
> Shut in the day,
> When streets are mired
> With sticky clay,
> When husband lingers
> Far away,
> The flirt becomes
> Supremely gay.

Now at dawn the carpenter rose and left his house. When she had made sure that he was gone, with laughing countenance she spent the dragging day in trying on all her best things. Then she called on an old lover and said: "My husband has gone to another village—the rascal! Please come to our house when the people are asleep." And he did so.

Now the carpenter spent the day in the forest, stole into his own house at twilight by a side entrance, and hid under the bed. At this juncture the other fellow arrived and got into bed. And when the car-

penter saw him, his heart was stabbed by wrath, and he thought: "Shall I rise and smite him? Or shall I wait until they are asleep and kill them both without effort? Or again, shall I wait to see how she behaves, listen to what she says to him?" At this moment she softly locked the door and went to bed.

But as she did so, she stubbed her toe on the carpenter's body. And she thought: "It must be that carpenter—the rascal!—who is testing me. Well, I will give him a taste of woman's tricks."

While she was thinking, the fellow became insistent. But she clasped her hands and said: "Dear and honored sir, you must not touch me." And he said: "Well, well! For what purpose did you invite me?"

"Listen," said she. "I went this morning to Gauri's shrine to see the goddess. There all at once I heard a voice in the sky, saying: 'What am I to do, my daughter? You are devoted to me, yet in six months' time, by the decree of fate, you will be a widow.' Then I said: 'O blessèd goddess, since you are aware of the calamity, you also know the remedy. Is there any means of making my husband live a hundred years?' And the goddess replied: 'Indeed there is—a remedy depending on you alone.' Of course I said: 'If it cost my life, pray tell me, and I will do it.' Then the goddess said: 'If you go to bed with another man, and embrace him, then the untimely death that threatens your husband will pass to him. And your husband will live another hundred years.' For this purpose I invited you. Now do what you had in mind. The words of a goddess must not be falsified—so much is certain." Then his face blossomed with noiseless laughter, and he did as she said.

Now the carpenter, fool that he was, felt his body thrill with joy on hearing her words, and he issued from under the bed, saying: "Bravo, faithful wife! Bravo, delight of the family! Because my heart was troubled by the gossip of evil creatures, I pretended a trip to another village in order to test you, and lay hidden under the bed. Come now, embrace me!"

With these words he embraced her and lifted her to his shoulder, then said to the fellow: "My dear and honored sir, you have come here because my good deeds earned this happiness. Through your favor I have won a full hundred years of life. You, too, must mount my shoulder."

So he forced the fellow, much against his will, to mount his shoulder, and then went dancing about to the doors of the houses of all his relatives.

"And that is why I say:

It argues utter want of sense
To pardon obvious offense;
The carpenter upon his head
Took wife and him who fouled his bed."

THE BUTTER-BLINDED BRAHMAN

THERE WAS ONCE A BRAHMAN named Theodore in a certain town. His wife, being unchaste and a pursuer of other men, was forever making cakes with sugar and butter for a lover, and so cheating her husband.

Now one day her husband saw her and said: "My dear wife, what are you cooking? And where are you forever carrying cakes? Tell the truth."

But her impudence was equal to the occasion, and she lied to her husband: "There is a shrine of the blessèd goddess not far from here. There I have undertaken a fasting ceremony, and I take an offering, including the most delicious dishes." Then she took the cakes before his very eyes and started for the shrine of the goddess, imagining that after her statement, her husband would believe it was for the goddess that his wife was daily providing delicious dishes. Having reached the shrine, she went down to the river to perform the ceremonial bath.

Meanwhile her husband arrived by another road and hid behind the statue of the goddess. And his wife entered the shrine after her bath, performed the various rites—laving, anointing, giving incense, making an offering, and so on—bowed before the goddess, and prayed: "O blessèd one, how may my husband be made blind?"

Then the Brahman behind the goddess' back spoke, disguising his natural tone: "If you never stop giving him such food as butter and butter-cakes, then he will presently go blind."

Now that loose female, deceived by the plausible revelation, gave the Brahman just that kind of food every day. One day the Brahman said: "My dear, I don't see very well." And she thought: "Thank the goddess."

Then the favored lover thought: "The Brahman has gone blind. What can he do to me?" Whereupon he came daily to the house without hesitation.

But at last the Brahman caught him as he entered, seized him by the

hair, and clubbed and kicked him to such effect that he died. He also cut off his wicked wife's nose, and dismissed her.

THE BRAHMAN, THE THIEF, AND THE GHOST

THERE WAS ONCE A POOR BRAHMAN in a certain place. He lived on presents, and always did without such luxuries as fine clothes and ointments and perfumes and garlands and gems and betel-gum. His beard and his nails were long, and so was the hair that covered his head and his body. Heat, cold, rain, and the like had dried him up.

Then someone pitied him and gave him two calves. And the Brahman began when they were little and fed them on butter and oil and fodder and other things that he begged. So he made them very plump.

Then a thief saw them and the idea came to him at once: "I will steal these two cows from this Brahman." So he took a rope and set out at night. But on the way he met a fellow with a row of sharp teeth set far apart, with a high-bridged nose and uneven eyes, with limbs covered with knotty muscles, with hollow cheeks, with beard and body as yellow as a fire with much butter in it.

And when the thief saw him, he started with acute fear and said: "Who are you, sir?"

The other said: "I am a ghost named Truthful. It is now your turn to explain yourself."

The thief said: "I am a thief, and my acts are cruel. I am on my way to steal two cows from a poor Brahman."

Then the ghost felt relieved and said: "My dear sir, I take one meal every three days. So I will just eat this Brahman today. It is delightful that you and I are on the same errand."

So together they went there and hid, waiting for the proper moment. And when the Brahman went to sleep, the ghost started forward to eat him. But the thief saw him and said: "My dear sir, this is not right. You are not to eat the Brahman until I have stolen his two cows."

The ghost said: "The racket would most likely wake the Brahman. In that case all my trouble would be vain."

"But, on the other hand," said the thief, "if any hindrance arises when you start to eat him, then I cannot steal the two cows either. First I will steal the two cows, then you may eat the Brahman."

So they disputed, each crying "Me first! Me first!" And when they became heated, the hubbub waked the Brahman. Then the thief said:

"Brahman, this is a ghost who wishes to eat you." And the ghost said: "Brahman, this is a thief who wishes to steal your two cows."

When the Brahman heard this, he stood up and took a good look. And by remembering a prayer to his favorite god, he saved his life from the ghost, then lifted a club and saved his two cows from the thief.

"And that is why I say:

From enemies expect relief,
If discord pierce their host;
Thus, life was given by the thief
And cattle by the ghost."

THE LOYAL MUNGOOSE

THERE WAS ONCE A BRAHMAN named Godly in a certain town. His wife mothered a single son and a mungoose. And as she loved little ones, she cared for the mungoose also like a son, giving him milk from her breast, and salves, and baths, and so on. But she did not trust him, for she thought: "A mungoose is a nasty kind of creature. He might hurt my boy."

One day she tucked her son in bed, took a water-jar, and said to her husband: "Now, Professor, I am going for water. You must protect the boy from the mungoose." But when she was gone, the Brahman went off somewhere himself to beg food, leaving the house empty.

While he was gone, a black snake issued from his hole and, as fate would have it, crawled toward the baby's cradle. But the mungoose, feeling him to be a natural enemy, and fearing for the life of his baby brother, fell upon the vicious serpent halfway, joined battle with him, tore him to bits, and tossed the pieces far and wide. Then, delighted with his own heroism, he ran, blood trickling from his mouth, to meet the mother; for he wished to show what he had done.

But when the mother saw him coming, saw his bloody mouth and his excitement, she feared that the villain must have eaten her baby boy, and without thinking twice, she angrily dropped the water-jar upon him, which killed him the moment that it struck. There she left him without a second thought, and hurried home, where she found the baby safe and sound, and near the cradle a great black snake, torn to bits. Then, overwhelmed with sorrow because she had thoughtlessly killed her benefactor, her son, she beat her head and breast.

At this moment the Brahman came home with a dish of rice gruel which he had got from someone in his begging tour, and saw his wife bitterly lamenting her son, the mungoose. "Greedy! Greedy!" she cried. "Because you did not do as I told you, you must now taste the bitterness of a son's death, the fruit of the tree of your own wickedness. Yes, this is what happens to those blinded by greed."

THE MICE THAT SET ELEPHANTS FREE

THERE WAS ONCE A REGION where people, houses, and temples had fallen into decay. So the mice, who were old settlers there, occupied the chinks in the floors of stately dwellings with sons, grandsons (both in the male and female line), and further descendants as they were born, until their holes formed a dense tangle. They found uncommon happiness in a variety of festivals, dramatic performances (with plots of their own invention), wedding-feasts, eating-parties, drinking-bouts, and similar diversions. And so the time passed.

But into this scene burst an elephant-king, whose retinue numbered thousands. He, with his herd, had started for the lake upon information that there was water there. As he marched through the mouse community, he crushed faces, eyes, heads, and necks of such mice as he encountered.

Then the survivors held a convention. "We are being killed," they said, "by these lumbering elephants—curse them! If they come this way again, there will not be mice enough for seed. Therefore let us devise a remedy effective in this crisis."

When they had done so, a certain number went to the lake, bowed before the elephant-king, and said respectfully: "O King, not far from here is our community, inherited from a long line of ancestors. There we have prospered through a long succession of sons and grandsons. Now you gentlemen, while coming here to water, have destroyed us by the thousand. Furthermore, if you travel that way again, there will not be enough of us for seed. If then you feel compassion toward us, pray travel another path. Consider the fact that even creatures of our size will some day prove of some service."

And the elephant-king turned over in his mind what he had heard, decided that the statement of the mice was entirely logical, and granted their request.

Now in the course of time a certain king commanded his elephant-

trappers to trap elephants. And they constructed a so-called water-trap, caught the king with his herd, three days later dragged him out with a great tackle made of ropes and things, and tied him to stout trees in that very bit of forest.

When the trappers had gone, the elephant-king reflected thus: "In what manner, or through whose assistance, shall I be delivered?" Then it occurred to him: "We have no means of deliverance except those mice."

So the king sent the mice an exact description of his disastrous position in the trap through one of his personal retinue, an elephant-cow who had not ventured into the trap, and who had previous information of the mouse community.

When the mice learned the matter, they gathered by the thousand, eager to return the favor shown them, and visited the elephant herd. And seeing king and herd fettered, they gnawed the guy-ropes where they stood, then swarmed up the branches, and by cutting the ropes aloft, set their friends free.

"And that is why I say:

Make friends, make friends, however strong
 Or weak they be:
Recall the captive elephants
 That mice set free."

THE ASS IN THE TIGER-SKIN

THERE WAS ONCE A LAUNDRYMAN named Clean-Cloth in a certain town. He had a single donkey who had grown very feeble from lack of fodder.

As the laundry man wandered in the forest, he saw a dead tiger, and he thought: "Ah, this is lucky. I will put this tiger-skin on the donkey and let him loose in the barley fields at night. For the farmers will think him a tiger and will not drive him out."

When this was done, the donkey ate barley to his heart's content. And at dawn the laundryman took him back to the barn. So as time passed, he grew plump. He could hardly squeeze into the stall.

But one day the donkey heard the bray of a she-donkey in the distance. At the mere sound he himself began to bray. Then the farmers perceived that he was a donkey in disguise, and killed him with blows from clubs and stones and arrows.

"And that is why I say:

However skilful in disguise,
However frightful to the eyes,
Although in tiger-skin arrayed,
The ass was killed—because he brayed."

THE FARMER'S WIFE

THERE WAS ONCE A FARMER who lived with his wife in a certain place. And because the husband was old, the wife was forever thinking of lovers, and could not possibly be contented at home. Her one idea was strange men.

Now a rogue who lived by pilfering, noticed her and said: "You lovely creature, my wife is dead, and I am smitten with love at the sight of you. Pray enrich me with love's perfect treasure."

And she said: "You beautiful man, if you feel that way, my husband has a great deal of money, and he is so old that he cannot stir. I will bring it, so that I may go somewhere with you and enjoy the delights of love."

"That is satisfactory to me," he replied. "Suppose you hasten to this spot at dawn, so that we may go together to some fascinating city where life may bear for me its perfect fruit." "Very well," she agreed, and went home with laughing countenance.

Then at night, while her husband slept, she took all the money, and reached the rendezvous at dawn. The rogue, for his part, put her in front, started south, and traveled two leagues, gaily enjoying the delights of conversation with her. But when he saw a river ahead, he reflected: "What am I to do with this middle-aged female? Besides, someone might perhaps pursue her. I will just take her money and be off."

So he said to her: "My dear, this is a great river, hard to cross. I will just take the money and put it safe on the far bank, then return to carry you alone on my back, and so transport you in comfort." "Do so, my belovèd," said she.

So he took the money to the last penny, and then he said: "Dearest, hand me your dress and your wrap, too, so that you may travel through the water unembarrassed." And when she did so, the rogue took the money and the two garments and went to the place he had in mind.

Then the farmer's wife sat down woebegone on the river-bank, digging her two hands into her throat. At that moment a she-jackal came to the spot, carrying a piece of meat. As she came up and peered about, a great

fish leaped from the water and was stranded on the bank. On spying him, she dropped the meat and darted at the fish. Whereupon a vulture swooped from the sky and flew off with the meat. And the fish, perceiving the jackal, struggled into the river. So the she-jackal had her pains for nothing, and as she gazed after the vulture, the naked woman smiled and said:

"You poor she-jackal!

The vulture has your meat;
The water holds your fish:
Of fish and flesh forlorn,
What further do you wish?"

And the she-jackal, perceiving that the woman was equally forlorn, having lost her husband's money and her lover, said with a sneer:

"You naked thing!

Your cleverness is twice
As great as mine, 'twould seem;
Lover and husband lost,
You sit beside the stream."

THE BRAHMAN'S DREAM

IN A CERTAIN TOWN lived a Brahman named Seedy, who got some barley-meal by begging, ate a portion, and filled a jar with the remainder. This jar he hung on a peg one night, placed his cot beneath it, and fixing his gaze on the jar, fell into a hypnotic reverie.

"Well, here is a jar full of barley-meal," he thought. "Now if famine comes, a hundred rupees will come out of it. With that sum I will get two she-goats. Every six months they will bear two more she-goats. After goats, cows. When the cows calve, I will sell the calves. After cows, buffaloes; after buffaloes, mares. From the mares I shall get plenty of horses. The sale of these will mean plenty of gold. The gold will buy a great house with an inner court. Then someone will come to my house and offer his lovely daughter with a dowry. She will bear a son, whom I shall name Moon-Lord. When he is old enough to ride on my knee, I will take a book, sit on the stable roof, and think. Just then Moon-Lord will see me, will jump from his mother's lap in his eagerness to ride on my knee, and will go too near the horses. Then I shall get angry and tell my wife to take the boy. But she will be busy with her chores and

will not pay attention to what I say. Then I will get up and kick her."

Being sunk in his hypnotic dream, he let fly such a kick that he smashed the jar. And the barley-meal which it contained turned him white all over.

SHELL-NECK, SLIM, AND GRIM

IN A CERTAIN LAKE lived a turtle named Shell-Neck. He had as friends two ganders whose names were Slim and Grim. Now in the vicissitudes of time there came a twelve-year drought, which begot ideas of this nature in the two ganders: "This lake has gone dry. Let us seek another body of water. However, we must first say farewell to Shell-Neck, our dear and long-proved friend."

When they did so, the turtle said: "Why do you bid me farewell? I am a water-dweller, and here I should perish very quickly from the scant supply of water and from grief at loss of you. Therefore, if you feel any affection for me, please rescue me from the jaws of this death. Besides, as the water dries in this lake, you two suffer nothing beyond a restricted diet, while to me it means immediate death. Consider which is more serious, loss of food or loss of life."

But they replied: "We are unable to take you with us since you are a water-creature without wings." Yet the turtle continued: "There is a possible device. Bring a stick of wood." This they did, whereupon the turtle gripped the middle of the stick between his teeth, and said: "Now take firm hold with your bills, one on each side, fly up, and travel with even flight through the sky, until we discover another desirable body of water."

But they objected: "There is a hitch in this fine plan. If you happen to indulge in the smallest conversation, then you will lose your hold on the stick, will fall from a great height, and will be dashed to bits."

"Oh," said the turtle, "from this moment I take a vow of silence, to last as long as we are in heaven." So they carried out the plan, but while the two ganders were painfully carrying the turtle over a neighboring city, the people below noticed the spectacle, and there arose a confused buzz of talk as they asked: "What is this cartlike object that two birds are carrying through the atmosphere?"

Hearing this, the doomed turtle was heedless enough to ask: "What are these people chattering about?" The moment he spoke, the poor simpleton lost his grip and fell to the ground. And persons who wanted meat cut him to bits in a moment with sharp knives.

The Enchanted Parrot

INTRODUCTION

THE ENCHANTED PARROT, or the *Suka Saptati,* "Seventy Stories," told by a parrot to keep her mistress from going out with her lovers for sixty-nine successive nights when her husband was away, is a charming collection of tales of feminine, and also masculine, infidelity, with a predominant sense of the comic, happening in a world of easy make-believe such as suggested by the *Arabian Nights.* The tales are for the most part simple and naïve. Like the *Arabian Nights* and the *Panchatantra,* it employs a framing story; like the *Panchatantra* and the *Hitopadesa,* it employs, but to a less extent, the device of a tale within a tale and delights in insertions of moral maxims for the edification of the hearers; and like the *Ocean of Stories,*[1] it rather delights in comments at the expense of women, dull husbands and Brahman monks, and in stories of rogues. Again the author is unknown, but the book was widely circulated and was certainly known to have existed before the eleventh century. These stories suggest Boccaccio.

What lifts *The Enchanted Parrot* from the rest is that here the comments are no longer broad generalities of impersonal proverbs, but have the distinct individual charm of a modern cynic and woman-hater. Cynicism, like that of the *Ecclesiastes,* is always refreshing, and even modern women can stand a few jokes at their expense.

The arts of women are these: deceitful speech; craft; oaths; pretended emotions; pretended weeping; pretended laughter; meaningless pleasures and

[1] *Ocean of Stories,* a giant collection of Hindu short stories, (Somadeva's *Kathā Sarit Sagara*), translated by C. H. Tawny, 2 vols., Calcutta, 1880. A beautiful edition, in 10 volumes, was privately printed for subscribers only in London.

pain; asking questions with a deferential air; indifference; equanimity, in prosperity or in adversity; making no difference between good and evil; side-long glances directed toward lovers—that is the list of the accomplishments practiced by the ladies of the town.

At any rate, no woman of the country need be offended.

But the author is usually defter and less explicit; besides, he classifies women with kings and serpents, all three of whom he hates heartily.

Kings, women and creepers generally lay hold of what is near to them.

Put not your trust in rivers, in savage beasts, in horned cattle, in armed men, in women, in princes. Kings are like soldiers clad in mail, savage, crooked in their ways as serpents creep on you for evil. A king slays with his smile; he may pay honor, but he is dangerous; the elephant kills with a touch, the serpent with a caress.

His comments are by no means confined to the subject of women:

How should one sleep who is overwhelmed with debt, who has a disagreeable wife, who is surrounded by enemies?

It is the speaker of unpleasant but wholesome truths who cannot find a listener.

Cleanliness in a crow, honesty in a gambler, mildness in a serpent, women satisfied with love, vigor in a eunuch, truth in a drunkard, friendship in a king—who ever heard of these things?

A stranger, if he is a rich man, is a relation; but a kinsman, if he be poor, is an outcast.

And there is something delightfully insinuating in the following:

Giving, receiving, imparting secrets, asking questions, eating in company—these are the five proofs of friendship.

The following selection is taken from the translation by the Rev. B. Hale Wortham (Luzac, London, 1911), with its rather unusual punctuation somewhat revised. In the words of the translator:

"The *Suka Saptati,* seventy tales of a parrot, are quite characteristic of Eastern story. The peg on which they hang is a certain Prabhāvatī. This lady's husband, whose name is Madana, has gone on a long journey. He has, however, left her his parrot, a bird which appears to be under a charm. Prabhāvatī, after her husband has been absent some little time, begins to feel rather dull, and her attendants, or friends, suggest that she had better look out for some admirer to console her during his absence. She accordingly is preparing to start on this errand, when the

parrot suddenly finds his voice, and remarks very strongly on Prabhāvatī's disreputable intentions. Prabhāvatī makes up her mind to have the parrot's neck wrung, but before actually departing, and ordering the bloodthirsty deed to be carried out, she reflects that after all it is only a bird speaking, and tells him that she means to go in spite of his well-meant advice. This starts the parrot off, and he bids her go by all means, if she is as clever as someone whom he knows. Prabhāvatī asks him who this person may be, and wherein his cleverness consists. This leads to Story I, and just when the climax arrives, the parrot stops, and asks Prabhāvatī and her friends how they think the story ends. Of course they don't know, and the parrot keeps them on tenterhooks for a bit, and finally tells them. By this time the evening is tolerably far advanced, so that it is of no use for Prabhāvatī to set out on her love-making expeditions, and she goes to bed with her attendants. This process is repeated for sixty-nine evenings, and finally Prabhāvatī's husband returns. From what he gathers, he does not altogether approve of his wife's goings on in his absence, and seems as if he meant to proceed to extremities, when the eloquent parrot calms him down with the seventieth story, after which Madana's father observes a great festival in honor of his son and daughter-in-law, and the parrot, having worked out the charm (or the curse), ascends to heaven in a rain of flowers."

The Enchanted Parrot

Translated by the Rev. B. Hale Wortham

YASODEVĪ AND HER TRANSMIGRATIONS

THE NEXT EVENING Prabhāvatī began to think over her pursuit of a lover, and asked the parrot for his advice. The parrot said: "Go, by all means, if you desire to go! That is to say, if you are as clever in getting out of difficulties as Yasodevī was."

"And pray who was Yasodevī?" rejoinded Prabhāvatī.

"If I tell you," replied the parrot, "and keep you here, perhaps you will carry out your intention of wringing my neck."

"Never mind," answered Prabhāvatī, "be the result what it may, I must hear the story of Yasodevī."

So the parrot began:

"There is a town called Nandana, whose prince bore the same name. He had a son, Rājasekhara, and Rājasekhara's wife was called Sasiprabhā. Now a certain Dhanasena came across her, and fell violently in love with her. He was absolutely consumed with the flame of his passion, and at last his mother, Yasodevī, asked him what was the matter. With many sighs and tears he told her. He must have the prince's wife. She was very difficult to get hold of, but he could not live without her. On hearing this, Yasodevī bid him be of good cheer, and said she would see what could be done. So she abstained from all food, and putting on her best clothes went to Sasiprabhā, taking with her a bitch. She assumed an appearance of grief, and taking Sasiprabhā aside, said to her: 'You see this bitch; well, you and I and this bitch were sisters in a former existence. As for me, I had no compunction in accepting the advances of my lovers; you received their addresses, but with some hesitation. But this was not the case with our sister. She would not have anything to do with men at any price; she kept them at a distance, and now you

see to what a condition she is reduced. She has to live as a bitch, all the time recollecting what she was. You, through your reluctance, may or may not remember your former state; but as far as I am concerned, I have no recollection of it whatever, for I thoroughly enjoyed myself. And so I am sorry for you, and I come to warn you by showing you this bitch, and telling you her story. If you have got a lover I advise you to give him all he wants, and save yourself from the disagreeables of a future state like this. For the person who gives liberally will himself be the recipient of endless favors. It is said: "Those who beg from house to house, merely let you know that they are there; they do not ask for anything, for the liberal always give alms freely according to their condition, to those in need of assistance." '

"Sasiprabhā was quite overcome by this address, and embracing Yasodevī wept over her and entreated her assistance in escaping from the fate which seemed to impend. So Yasodevī introduced Sasiprabhā to her own son and Rājasekhara, who had been bribed with magnificent presents of gold and jewels, was quite willing to let her go, and thought that a great piece of good luck had befallen him.

"So Yasodevī by her skill and cleverness cheated the prince of the princess, and gained her own ends. If you are as clever as she was, go; if not, stay at home—go to bed, and don't make a fool of yourself."

THE QUEEN AND THE LAUGHING FISH[1]

I

THERE IS A CITY called Ujjayinī, and the king's name is Vikramāditya. His queen was Kāmalīnā. She was a lady of very noble family, and was the king's favorite wife. One day the king was dining with her and he gave her some roast fish. She looked at them (the men present) and said, "Sir! I cannot bear to look at these men, much less to touch them!" On these words the fish burst into a loud laugh, so loud that it was heard by all the people in the town. The king could not understand this, so he asked the astrologers, who were acquainted with the language of birds, what the fish meant by their laughter. None of them could tell him; so he sent for his private chaplain, who was the head of the Brahmans in the town, and said: "If you don't tell me what those fish

[1] This is another example of enclosing stories within a story, and of the abundance of wise-cracking comments in a Hindu story.

meant by laughing at what the queen said, I shall send you and all the Brahmans into exile." The chaplain, on hearing this, was a good deal upset, and was quite sure that he and the rest of the reverend gentlemen would have to go, for it seemed impossible to find any answer to the question. His daughter observed his depressed condition and said: "Father! What's the matter? Why do you look so dismal? Tell me the cause of the trouble. You know people possessed of wisdom should not lose their self-possession even if difficulties arise. For it has been said: 'The man who is not overjoyed in prosperity, who is not cast down in adversity, who is steadfast in difficulties, such a man as this has been born for an everlasting ornament and protection to the world.' "

So the Brahman told his daughter the whole story, and how the king had threatened to banish him; since—

"There is not a single person in this world on whose friendship or affection one can rely: how much less on that of a king who walks in the ways of treachery."

For it has been said—"Cleanliness in a crow; honesty in a gambler; mildness in a serpent; women satisfied with love; vigor in a eunuch; truth in a drunkard; friendship in a king—who ever heard of these things?"

Moreover—"Put not your trust in rivers, in savage beasts, in horned cattle, in armed men, in women, in princes. Kings are like soldiers clad in mail, savage, crooked in their ways as serpents creep on you for evil. A king slays with his smile; he may pay honor, but he is dangerous; the elephant kills with a touch, the serpent with a caress."

"I have served the king," continued the Brahman, "faithfully all these years, yet he has become my enemy, and will send me and my fellow Brahmans into exile. It has been said—

" 'A man may give up something for the sake of his village; he may give up his village for the sake of his country; but he will give up the whole world to save his life.' "

When the Brahman's daughter heard that, she said: "This, Father, is all very true, but no respect will be paid to a servant that has been sent adrift by his master.

"For it has been said—'A man may be of the highest character, or very commonplace. If he devotes himself to the service of the ruler, whichever he may be, he will get nothing out of it. The king will take the first man he comes across, be he ignorant, or learned, honorable or dishonor-

able, into his service; for kings, women, and creepers generally lay hold of what is nearest to them.'

"Besides this—'A man may be learned, energetic, skilful, ambitious, well versed in all his duties, but he is nothing without the prince's favor. A man may be nobly born, possessed of ability, but if he does not pay court to the prince he may just as well spend his life in begging or perpetual penance. One who falls into the power of diseases, crocodiles or kings, and the stupid man who does not know how to get out of a difficulty, will never keep his position in life.'

"For it has been said—'Kings are as nothing to those wise and skilful persons who by their power bring lions, tigers, serpents and elephants into subjection. But men who are wise rely on the king's favor, and so attain to eminence. The sandal grove only flourishes on Mount Malaya.'

"All the insignia of rank—parasols, elephants, horses—are given by the king to those whom he delights to honor. You are the object of the king's affection and honor, therefore, my dear father, do not be downcast. The chief minister's duty is to clear up, from time to time, all doubts which beset the king's mind. Therefore cheer up! I will find out for you what the fish meant by their laughter."

The Brahman at this advice felt somewhat comforted, and went and told the king what his daughter had said. The king was delighted, and immediately sent for the damsel. She came and made an elaborate obeisance to his majesty and said, "Sir! pray do not treat these Brahmans so ill; it is not their fault. Pray tell me what kind of a laugh was it that you heard from the fish? Still, I am only a woman, and I wonder you are not ashamed to ask me to clear the matter up. For—

" 'A king may be vile, yet he is even then not as another man, but bears a divine form.' You, Vikramāditya, as your name tells us, are the bearer of divine power. For it has been said—'From Indra comes might; from fire comes heat; from Yama wrath; from Kuvera riches; but a king is formed from Kā and Vishnu combined.'

"The person you ought to blame is yourself, for it is your business to remove doubts and difficulties.

"Hear, then, what I have to tell you:

"And if you can't find out the answer send for me. At any rate you cannot possibly doubt the queen's fidelity, seeing that she never goes out of doors."

Neither the king nor his wise men had the slightest idea what these

verses meant, and so the Brahman's clever daughter went away, and left them in their bewilderment.

2

The king spent a sleepless night trying to puzzle out the meaning of the verses. For, as it has been said—

"How should one sleep who is overwhelmed with debt, who has a disagreeable wife, who is surrounded by enemies?"

So after a miserable night the king sent again for the wise maiden and said: "I cannot make out what the fish meant by their laughter."

"Your majesty had better not ask me," she replied, "or perhaps you may repent of it as the merchant's wife did when she was determined to find out where the cakes came from." The king said: "And what was that?" She told him the following story:—

"There is a town called Jayantī, and a merchant whose name was Sunmata lived in it. His wife was Padiminī. He was unlucky enough to lose all his money; in consequence his family would have nothing more to do with him, for it is well known that wealth and friendship go together—

" 'He who has money has friends; he who has money has relations; He who has money has wisdom; in fact, he is a man of importance.'

"It is said in the Mahābhārata—'There are five conditions in which a man though living may be regarded as dead: Poverty, disease, stupidity, exile, hopeless slavery.' Also—'A stranger, if he is a rich man, is a relation; but a kinsman, if he be poor, is an outcast.'

"So this merchant used to take straw and wood into the market for sale. One day he could not find either, but he came across an image of Ganesa, made of wood. He thought to himself, 'This will suit my purpose very well.'

"For it has been said—'There is nothing that a hungry man will not do for bread; and a man who is ruined has no conscience. Such will be guilty of any crime; what a respectable man would not dream of doing comes natural to them."

"So he made up his mind to break the image up for the sake of the wood, when Ganesa said to him: 'If you will leave my image alone, I will give you every day five cakes made of sugar and butter; you can come here for them. Only you must not tell anyone how you come by them. If you let the secret out, I shall be clear of my promise.'

"He gladly consented, and Ganesa gave him five cakes which he took

home and gave to his wife. With some of them she supplied the wants of her own house, and gave what was left over to a friend. The friend asked her one day where the cakes came from; Padminī could not answer the question, and the friend said, 'If you don't tell me, then there is an end of our friendship.' For, as the saying is—

" 'Giving, receiving, imparting secrets, asking questions, eating in company: these are the five proofs of friendship.'

"Padminī replied: 'My husband knows, but he says it is a secret and will not tell me; even if I were to ask him a hundred times, I should get nothing out of him.' The friend replied: 'Then all I have to say is that you must make a very bad use of your youth and beauty, if you can't find this out.'

"So Padminī asked her husband again, 'Where do those cakes come from?' 'By the favor of destiny,' he replied, 'for it has been said, Fate, if it is on your side will accomplish your wishes. She will bring you what you want, even from a distant land, from the ends of the world, from the bottom of the sea. Once upon a time a mouse, making a hole for itself, fell into the jaws of a serpent. The serpent could not find anything to eat and was in the last stage of starvation, but refreshed by the lucky meal he went on his way rejoicing. So fate is the cause of a man's rise or fall.'

"Padminī, when she found her husband would not tell her, refused to eat. He was put in a difficulty and said: 'If I tell you what you want to know disaster will follow, and you will be sorry for it.' Padminī, however, took no heed of warnings, but continued to be obstinate, and at last her husband was obliged to tell her; for it is said, 'When the gods want to ruin a man, they first take away his senses, so that he does not know evil from good.'

"Then, your majesty," continued the Brahman's daughter, "Sumati was prevailed on by his foolish wife to tell her the secret. For—

" 'Even Rāma failed to recognize the golden deer; Nahusha harnessed the Brahmans to his chariot; Arjuna carried off both cow and calf; Yudhisthira gambled away his wife and four brothers. So often even a good man, in a crisis, becomes the victim of folly.'

"Well! Padminī got the secret out of her husband, and went and told her friend, and the result was the friend sent her own husband to Ganesa, who gave him the cakes. Next day Padminī went with Sumati to Ganesa for the daily present, and he told them plainly that it was no use their coming any more to him, for the bargain had been broken

and the cakes had been given to someone else. So Padminī's husband gave her a good scolding, and they went home very sorry for what they had done. In the same way your majesty should not ask me to explain the meaning of the verses to you lest you repent of your knowledge. You had better make them out by yourself, without my help." So saying, she got up and went home.

3

After another sleepless night the king not being able to find out the meaning of the verses, sent for the Brahman's daughter again, and said, "Pray, tell me the meaning of the verses without any more delay."

She answered: "You must not importune the gods with entreaties, or repentance will follow, as was the case with the Brahman who fell in love with Sthagikā. There is a town somewhere or other—it matters not where—whose king is Vīrābhya, and in it lived a Brahman called Keshava. One day the thought occurred to him: 'Why should I not increase the wealth my father has left me?' For it has been said—

" 'The glory that you gain from your own virtues is the truest; next best is that which you gain from your father; but that which comes to you from a remoter source is worth nothing.'

"So he started with a view of getting more money, and in the course of his wandering passed through several towns, and places of sacred pilgrimage. At last he reached an out-of-the-way place where he saw an ascetic sitting cross-legged in meditation.

"The Brahman came up to him and made a respectful obeisance. The ascetic ceased meditating for a moment, and seeing the Brahman said: 'To whom in this world should liberality be shown? Who should be protected? To whom should be granted what seems almost impossible of acquirement?'

"The Brahman rose up from his humble posture and said, 'Sir, to *me*. I am the pursuit of wealth.'

"The ascetic knew that his visitor was a Brahman and was quite shocked to hear him utter such an unworthy sentiment, for it has been said—

" 'To see a distinguished person begging, in a state of poverty, asking for what he ought not to want, troubles the mind, though one is prepared to give. For a good man, though he may be himself in trouble, performs his duty to another. The sandal tree may be broken in a thousand pieces, but it still keeps its cooling power.'

"The ascetic therefore gave his visitor a magic cloak, and said: 'Whenever you shake this, 500 gold pieces will fall from it; but you must not give it to anyone, or say where the money comes from.'

"The Brahman thanked the ascetic and departed with his cloak. Next morning he shook it, and immediately became the possessor of 500 gold pieces. He then proceeded on his travels and reached a town called Ratuavatī, where he fell violently in love with a young lady called Sthagikā. She could not make out where all the money came from, and her mother to whom she confided her doubts said: 'Well, what is this Brahman's business, for he seems to have plenty of money. How does he come by it?' So she asked her admirer but he would not tell her. By dint of worrying, however, she got it out of him, and he let out all about the magic cloak. The consequence was that she waited till he was asleep and then stole the cloak, and as now he had lost all his money, the girl's mother showed him the door. It has been said—

" 'There is not much cleverness required to deceive one who has confidence in us, nor is much courage required to kill one who is asleep.'

"The Brahman, when he woke up, could not find his cloak, and went and laid a complaint before the magistrates, asserting with great vehemence that he had been robbed. The case was therefore tried, and the mother and daughter were charged with the theft. The mother said: 'This good-for-nothing fellow made love to my daughter. He has invented this story about his cloak—no sensible person could believe such nonsense. The whole thing is a fabrication from beginning to end. He came to my house, and my servants finding that he was a foreigner turned him out of doors, and we sent the cloak back to the holy man who gave it to him.' This decided the case against the Brahman, and he lost both Sthagikā and his cloak, all through letting out the secret, and this may be your majesty's fate too, if you persist in your curiosity."

With these words the damsel got up and went home.

4

The king was still unable to fathom the meaning of the verses, so the next day he sent for the Brahman's daughter. She said: "Your majesty! You should not be so importunate. A king should not be so pertinacious, whether the objects at which he aims be good or bad. Kings are as the body, and their subjects are only their limbs. Still if I obey your commands evil will befall you, as it befell the merchant who lost his home and all that he had." "How was that?" said the king. The Brahman's

daughter answered: "There is a place called Tripura, and in it lived Prince Vikrama. A merchant inhabited that city whose wife's name was Sabhagā. She was a person of very light frivolous disposition, and do what he would he could not keep her within bounds. One day when she was wandering about town and getting into mischief, she came across a merchant who lived in the house of a Yaksha. She promptly fell in love with him, and as he very willingly responded to her advances, she made up her mind to run away with him. Before going she called a confidential maid-servant and said: 'I am going away for a bit: directly after I have started do you set the house on fire, and my husband will be so taken up trying to put it out that he will not find out I am gone. I shall be back again before long.' So no sooner had Sabhagā started, than her confidante set the place on fire, and her husband who had had his suspicions of the merchant, left keeping guard over Yaksha's house and came home to try and put the fire out. Meanwhile her plan succeeded perfectly, while the house was burnt down.

"Thus the merchant lost house and everything, and that will be your majesty's fate if you are so determined. If, however, you permit, I will tell you what you want to know myself."

So saying, she departed.

5

Next morning the king, who was still quite unable to find the answer, sent for the Brahman's daughter and said: "You promised to tell me the meaning of those verses, for I cannot make out what they mean myself." The girl replied: "If you cannot find out the meaning, then listen to me. You have among your soothsayers and wise men, one called Pushpakāra. He is their head. I believe he is a very prudent discreet person. Tell me, why is he called Pushpakāra?" The king replied: "He is rightly called Pushpakāra, because when he smiles it seems as if a shower of blossoms fell from his countenance. This was reported to be his characteristic, and so messengers were sent to fetch him to prove the truth of this report about him. When he came he neither laughed nor was there any shower of blossoms that fell from him, and for that reason they called him 'The bond of secrecy.' " The Brahman's daughter said: "And why did not Pushpakāra laugh? Do you know the reason?" "I haven't the least idea," replied the king. "Then you should make him tell you," rejoined the Brahman's daughter. "You have asked me what the fish meant by laughing. You ask him the same question. Perhaps

he will answer it and tell you at the same time why he did not laugh himself."

So the king sent for Pushpakāra, and as he was a wise man, and of some importance, he made him valuable presents and asked him why he did not laugh, and why the fish did. He replied: "Family scandals should not be talked about. Loss of money, sorrow of mind, difficulties at home, fraud, contempt—these are things which no wise man ever publishes. Still the command of the king, equal to that of Sudra, has surpassing power on the earth; the very name of a righteous, energetic king, surpasses the sun in magnificence. Therefore I will answer your majesty's question. I found out that my wife was in love with someone else, and therefore grief stopped my laughter."

Then the king put his own difficulty before the wise man, and the latter gave no answer but struck the queen full in the face. The queen pretended to faint, and Pushpakāra burst into a fit of laughter. The king was extremely angry and looking at the magician and the Brahman's daughter, said, "What is there to laugh at? What do you mean by this?" "Sir," replied the magician, making a profound bow, "the queen did not faint the other night because she was struck by the young men in whose company she was. Now when I strike her she faints, or pretends to faint." The king grew still more angry and said, "What is this? Do you know it of your own knowledge? The magician answered, "I saw it with my own eyes, and if your majesty is not convinced I will prove it to you." The king went into the matter and found out everything. The magician said, "I suppose your majesty sees now why the Brahman's daughter would not tell you the reason why the fish laughed (when they heard her say that she could not bear to look at the men)." The end of it was that Pushpakāra and the Brahman's daughter were sent home in a considerable state of trepidation, while the queen and her lovers were sewn up in a sack and thrown into the river.

THE SON OF PROMISE

Next day Prabhāvatī's friends addressed her and said: "Go where the sandalwood ointment is rubbed off by the sweat which falls. Go where the sounds of love are manifold; where the tinkle of the anklets is silent: where everything incites to love. Go where the universal law of love prevails. For—

" 'Health, pleasure, peace, power, lordship: these are nothing without

love.' It has been said—'The woman with long half-closing eyes, looking at their own forms resplendent with beauty in the curving mirrors, wait with longing for the lover's approach. It is through their attractiveness that women gain the fruit of love.' "

The parrot answered: Men are easily won over; they always speak fair. It is the speaker of unpleasant though wholesome truths who cannot find a listener. But why say more? You and your friends are determined on evil deeds.

(The parrot continued:)

There is a town called Padmavatī, where the rays of the sun shine on streets paved with jewels, as though the glow of the gems on the hood of the serpent king had come down to earth. When the sun scorches, when the long days are unbearable, when the wind is the breath of a furnace, when everything is dried up or perishes through the heat, sandalwood ointment, light clothing, refreshing drink—these things bringing coolness and delight in conquering the heat. The heat is but a slave to those who at midday anoint themselves with the sandal, who bathe at evening, whose nights are tempered by the wind of the fans.

There was a merchant in the town called Chandana, and he and his wife Prabhāvatī passed the hot season on the roof of their house.

Even the sun supported in the heaven by his rays descends into the ocean when his day is done. For it has been said—"When fate is hostile it is useless to try and reach greatness!"

Even the thousand rays cannot support the sun when his time for setting is come. Then the sun, sunk low in the heaven, his brilliancy departed, shines like a piece of coral; and presently the wide-eyed moon comes forward and takes up his place, rising over the Eastern mountain, accompanied by the myriads of stars, to kill the darkness. The moon standing with her head above the Eastern mountain in the beginning of the night shines forth—a torch to the world overwhelmed by the gloom. The moon rising from behind the Eastern mountain shines resplendent as she lies in the lap of her beloved night, or as she stands gleaming on Krishna's head.

Such were the days and nights when Chandana and his wife passed their time together. They had a son whose name was Rāma, and to him his father taught the mysteries of the divine wisdom.

His mother prayed to Chandra and said: "I have but one only son: I am therefore exceedingly pained with anxiety." Chandra replied: "It

is best for you that you should have but one son. For a son that is clever, gentle, self-denying, discreet, the abode of the arts, the dwelling-place of virtue; one only son such as this is all sufficient. Besides, what is the good of more sons? They may produce grief and care. It is better to be satisfied with one whose nature, whose disposition is noble."

But Prabhāvatī was not satisfied; so she took a woman called Dhūrtamāyā into her confidence, and said: "If you will train a son for me, able to resist all deceitful arts of women, I will give you 100 pieces of gold." "I will give you a son," replied Dhūrtamāyā, "and if he falls a victim to female seduction, I will forfeit to you twice as many pieces of money." So the bargain was concluded and signed and the son was placed in the merchant's house, where he became the object of all the wiles that women could devise.

The arts of women are these: deceitful speech; craft; oaths; pretended emotions; pretended weeping; pretended laughter; meaningless expressions of pleasure and pain; asking questions with a deferential air; indifference; equanimity, in prosperity or in adversity; making no difference between good and evil; sidelong glances directed toward lovers—that is the list of the accomplishments practiced by the ladies of the town.

So the son, handed over according to the agreement with Dhūrtamāyā, was sent by his father to the island of Suvarna to acquire wealth. In that island lived a lady called Kalāvatī, and with her he spent a whole year. One day he said to Kalāvatī: "Pray tell me! My youngest sister has often said that, although she was skilled in all the arts of attracting men, she never could succeed in getting anything out of her admirers. How is this to be accomplished?" Kalāvatī repeated this to her mother. "My dear," replied the old lady, "it is quite clear that this admirer of yours is well up in the ways of women: you can't catch him like this; perhaps flattery might succeed. When he is thinking of going back home, you say that you want to go with him, and that if he leaves you, you will drown yourself—and so on. I daresay he would give you anything you liked to ask for." Kalāvatī answered, "My dear mother, don't put it in that way: I care nothing for his money without him, and it has been said—

" 'Do not set your heart on riches gained by wickedness, or from an enemy whom you have humiliated.' "

Her mother answered: "Not at all, my daughter; riches are the cause of death or life. It has been said—

"'A man who acts with energy is sure to prosper; for energy in all matters is the road to fortune. Those who have not revealed secrets, who have done no evil, who have not slain without cause—they attain glory. Fate is the cause of justice and injustice: the cause of honor and of dishonor. Fate makes a man both a giver and an asker.'

"You do as I have told you," continued her mother. "I will manage all the rest." So she listened to the advice her mother had given, and the end of it was, that the merchant's son gave her all his money, and after she had got hold of several millions which had belonged to him, he was turned out of doors and sent adrift.

So Kalāvatī's admirer returned home, having lost both money and credit. His father, seeing him in this condition, was much distressed, and asked how it had all come about. He did not like to tell him, but told his spiritual father, who said: "My son, do not be cast down! Good luck and bad luck are equally the lot of man. Why should wise men think so much of money? If it goes, grieve not after it: if it comes back, care not for it."

When his father heard all that had happened, he went to Dhūrtamāyā and said: "I have come to tell you that a great misfortune has happened. My son has fallen a victim to the treachery of a woman." "Who has not been ruined by women?" replied Dhūrtamāyā, "for it has been said, 'A man who gains wealth becomes proud; he who falls into calamities loses his senses. Who can be the friend of a king? Who has not come into the power of death? Who does not respect a rich man? Who that falls into the net of the evil escapes without loss?' Therefore if you will take a passage for me in a ship, I will go back with your son. It has been said, 'Damage may be repaid with damage, injury with injury; if you pull out my feathers, I will pull out your hair.'

"I agreed that if your son were cheated by a woman I would be responsible. For, 'Though the earth, supported by the serpent king, the mighty mountain, the tortoise, the elephant, may move, that which has been determined by the wise and thoughtful is never moved, even in the course of ages.' "

So Dhūrtamāyā and Chandana's son went back to Survana. All the inhabitants including Kālavatī welcomed him, but he did not recover his money. The question was therefore, what could Dhūrtamāyā do? Well, as the money was not forthcoming, she put on the disguise of a Chandalā and went about trying to find an opportunity of getting

it back. In the course of her wanderings she came across Chandana's son in the company of Kālavatī. He saw her at the same time, and rushed to meet her, a line of action which had been already agreed upon between them. Kālavatī followed him, and exclaimed, "Pray who is this?" He replied, "This is my mother; I have not seen her since I lost all my money!" Dhūrtamāyā seizing hold of his hand greeted him affectionately, and said: "My son! You went to this lady's house! You fell a victim to her wiles, but after a time you escaped. You know all the money you took away belonged to me."

This she kept on asserting with oaths and imprecations, until Kālavatī and her mother took the woman disguised as a Chandalā into the house and said: "Madam! tell us, where do you come from? What is your name? In short, who are you?" "I," she replied, "am one of Sundarasana's minstrels, the king of Padmavatī. This son of mine took away all my money, and you stole it from him." Kālavatī and her mother were thoroughly frightened and said, "Here is the money! Pray take it!" "No," answered Dhūrtamāyā, "not unless the king of this country gives me permission."

Then they fell down at her feet and said: "We pray you accept it and have mercy on us!" So she took it, and having been treated with the greatest respect by Kālavatī and her mother, went back with Rāma rejoicing to their own country.

DEVIKĀ AND HER FOOLISH HUSBAND

THERE IS A LARGE VILLAGE called Kukhādā; in it dwelt a certain Jarasa, who was a great fool. His wife's name was Devikā; she was a flighty, ill-conducted person, and had a lover—a Brahman—whom she used to meet under a Vibhītaka tree, some way from the village. These meetings were a great subject of gossip in the place, and in the course of time her husband heard of them. So he made up his mind to see into the matter himself and went and climbed into the tree. What he saw from his hiding place fully justified all the gossip and he called out to his wife: "You good-for-nothing hussy! You have been up to this game for some time past." She was put into somewhat of a difficulty and said: "I don't know what you mean!" "I will let you know what I mean," he answered, "if you will just wait till I come down." So she promised to wait till he came down from the tree, and meanwhile sent her lover away. At last her husband reached the ground. "It is of no use

your making excuses," he said, "you have been caught in the act." "My dear husband!" she replied. "You must know that this tree has very peculiar properties: any one who climbs up into it can see at once whether his or her spouse has been faithful." Her husband replied, "Well, you climb up and see if it is so," which she did, and cried out, "You good-for-nothing wretch! You have been running after other women for days and days." As this was perfectly true, the fool had nothing to say, and so he made up with his wife and they went home together.

THE LADY AND THE TIGER

In a village called Devalākhya lived a prince whose name was Rājasinha. His wife was a person of irreproachable reputation, but very ill-tempered and quarrelsome. One day she had a violent altercation with her husband, and in consequence left home and started off with her two sons to her father's house. She traveled through several towns and villages, and at last reached a large wood near Malaya, where she saw a tiger. The tiger saw her too, and came toward her lashing his tail with rage. She felt somewhat alarmed, but put on a bold front, and administering a smart slap to her sons she said: "What do you mean by quarreling over who is to have a tiger to eat? Can't you see one here close by? Eat him first and then we will go and find another." The tiger heard all this, and thinking to himself, "Surely this lady must be indeed a formidable person," took to his heels and ran away in terror.

Presently a jackal met him. He burst into a fit of laughter and said: "Hullo! Here is a tiger running away from something in a fright." "Friend jackal," replied the tiger, "the sooner you go off to some far distant country the better, for there is a most terrible person hereabouts —a regular tiger-eater!—such as one only hears of in fables. She has almost been the death of me; as soon as I saw her, I ran away as fast as I could." "Well, I am surprised," said the jackal. "Do you mean that you are afraid of what after all is only a piece of human flesh?" "I was close to her," answered the tiger, "and what she did and said was enough to frighten any one." The jackal answered: "Well, I think I shall go by myself and see if I can find this tiger-eating lady. You had perhaps better not come, as she might recognize you again." "Whether you go with me or without me," replied the tiger, "it will make no difference; you are certain to be destroyed."

"Well, then," said the jackal, "let me mount on your back, and we will go together." So the jackal was tied on the tiger's back and off they started, and very soon found the tiger-eater with her two sons. She felt a little nervous at first, seeing the tiger had come back accompanied by a jackal, but reflecting a minute she cried out: "You rascally jackal! Once upon a time you used to bring me three tigers at once; what do you mean by coming here with only one?" The tiger heard this, and was so frightened that he turned and fled with the jackal on his back.

The tiger continued his headlong course, while the jackal, tied on the tiger's back, suffered the greatest discomfort and inconvenience. The question for him was how to get out of this unfortunate position, for the tiger in deadly fear, tore through rivers, over mountains, through forests. Suddenly he burst into a loud fit of laughter. The tiger exclaimed: "Well! I can't see what there is to laugh at!" "A great deal, I think," replied the jackal. "It just occurred to me how cleverly we have cheated that scoundrelly tiger-eater. Here I am safe and sound with your help, and she has been left behind, no one knows where. That was why I laughed. So, my dear tiger, do let me get down and see where we are." The tiger felt flattered and willingly loosed the jackal off his back. No sooner had he done so than he suddenly fell down dead, and the jackal went off rejoicing. For it has been said—

"Wisdom is better than pomp and display, for by it men gain place, riches, and honor; but he who is devoid of wisdom falls into dire misfortune. The strength of the ignorant is used to carry out the business of another, even as the surpassing might of an elephant is made subject to man."

THE CONCLUDING STORY

At the conclusion of these stories, Madana returned from his expedition, and was received by Prabhāvatī with every demonstration of affection.

The parrot said, very slowly and solemnly—

"Affection in woman means nothing; pride in woman means nothing. All the time that you have been absent, she has been my friend and devoted to me."

Madana heard what the parrot said, but he did not pay much attention to it. The parrot smiled and continued: "He who hears good advice and follows it is blessed both in this world and in the next." Madana

therefore was induced to ask the parrot what he meant. Prabhāvatī at this felt a little bit anxious as to what might come out, for it has been said—"The good are always bold, sustained by consciousness of the good. The wicked are always afraid, for their evil conscience makes cowards of them."

So Prabhāvatī said to her husband, "Sir! your place has been well supplied, for in this house dwells a parrot, who seems to have come direct from the abode of the gods, and who speaks words of wisdom. He has been even as a husband and son to me."

The parrot at these words felt a little ashamed of himself, for it did not seem to him that he had merited such compliments. So Madana turned to Prabhāvatī and said: "Pray, what were the words of wisdom with which the parrot consoled you?"

She replied: "My lord, a speaker of truth may be found, but it is not so easy to find a listener, for it has been said—'Men who say what is pleasant are always welcome, but those who tell unpalatable truths, will not find an audience.'

"Now, my husband, hear me. After your departure, for a time I kept you in remembrance, though there was separation between us. Then evil friends came by, and tried to lead me astray. This bird prevented my following after them, and held me back seventy nights, by means of the stories which he told me. So I was prevented from following my desires, and my designs of evil were not fulfilled. From today—whether in life or in death—you, my husband, shall be my chief object."

At the conclusion of this harangue, Madana turned to the parrot and asked what in the world it all meant.

The parrot answered: "Speech must not be uttered hastily by the wise; those who know what is right and proper must act accordingly. Sir, I say nothing of the foolish, drunkards, women, persons afflicted with disease, those in love, the weak, the wrathful. The mad, the careless, the timid, the starving, such as these have but few virtues. There are ten who know not the way of righteousness—the mad, the careless, the drunkard, the feeble, the wrathful, the glutton, the hasty, the coward, the covetous, the lustful.

"Pray grant Prabhāvatī pardon for her shortcomings. Indeed they were not her fault, but the fault of her evil companions. For it is said—

" 'The virtuous fall into evil ways through contact with the depraved. Even Bhishma stole a cow under the influence of Duryodhana. The

king's daughter was led astray by a Vidyādhara; but, though her fault was plain, she was forgiven by her father.'"

The parrot then told Madana the following story—

"There is a mountain called Malaya, and on the top of it is Manohara, a city of the Gandharvas. In it lived a certain Madana, a Gandharva, and he had a wife whose name was Ratnāvalī. Their daughter was Madanamanjarī. She was extremely beautiful and fascinating, and everyone who saw her absolutely lost his senses, whether god or hero. It was quite impossible to find a husband for her sufficiently good-looking. It so happened one day that a certain Nārada came by; when he saw her he was so fascinated by her charms that he went off his head. After a time, however, Nārada, who was a Rishi, came to himself. And he solemnly cursed her, in these words: 'Since the fire of passion has been kindled in me at the sight of your beauty, you shall be the victim of deceit.' Then her father, hearing the curse, bowed to the ground before the Rishi, and said: 'Sir, show compassion on my daughter, and grant her forgiveness!' Nārada replied: 'She shall indeed be deceived, but she shall not suffer loss, nor shall she fail in gaining a husband. On the top of Mount Meru is a city called Vipula, and in it dwells the Gandharva, Kanaprabha. He shall be your daughter's husband.' With these words Nārada departed, and according to his promise Madanamanjarī was given in marriage to the Gandharva.

Soon after this, her husband left her, and went on a journey to Kailasa. She was inconsolable at his departure, and lay full length on a stone slab in the courtyard of her home. Here she was seen by a Vidyādhara, who made advances of love to her. She declined them without hesitation, but eventually, putting on the form of her husband, he accomplished his object. Before long her husband returned, but it appeared to him that she was not particularly glad to see him. He thought that there must be some counter-attraction, and eventually he worked himself up to such a state of jealousy that he contemplated putting an end to his wife's existence. So Madanamanjarī, seeing her end in view, went to the shrine of the goddess Durgā, and made loud lamentation. The goddess heard her complaints and said to her husband, "Noble Gandharva! Your wife is guiltless; she was deceived by a Vidyādhara, who put on your form. Since she was ignorant of the real state of things, how could she be to blame? Besides, the cause of all this is the curse pronounced on her by the Rishi Nārada. Now the curse is worked out, and since she is free from guilt you must take her back.' Hearing the

words of the goddess, Kanaprabha took his wife home, and they lived happily together.

"So, Madana," continued the parrot, "if you have any confidence in my words, receive your wife kindly, for there is no evil in her."

Then Madana, obedient to the parrot's wish, took Prabhāvatī home, and his father Haridatta, rejoicing at his son's return, made a great feast. While the festival was proceeding, a rain of flowers fell from heaven, and the parrot—the adviser and confidant of Prabhāvatī—freed from the curse which had compelled him to wear a parrot's form, ascended to the abode of the gods, and Madana and Prabhāvatī passed the remainder of their lives in peace and happiness.

BUDDHISM

The Dhammapada

INTRODUCTION

THE DHAMMAPADA, or "Words of the Doctrine," is a book of Buddhist aphorisms in 423 verses, but to say this is to mislead. It is not a collection of wise sayings in haphazard order, but a continuous, original, rare work of literature, unified in rhythm, style, themes and treatment, and infused with a high moral passion. The words are ascribed to Buddha himself; while scholars disagree on the subject, as scholars must, the layman stands on the sure ground that the thoughts represent correctly and truly Buddha's own teachings. The author of the verses is unknown. Whoever wrote this book must have caught the fire of a valiant call to the religious life and felt the spiritual joy that we associate with Thomas à Kempis. The obvious common-sense conclusion is that if Buddha himself had not spoken with this valiant voice, he could not have communicated it to his disciple, the unknown author. What we must be thankful for is that the voice of Buddha can still be distinctly heard through his work, which must be read continuously from the beginning to the end. That the sayings are often sharp and witty like aphorisms is the incidental literary quality of this work; behind them all, we hear the voice of someone who had something very important to say. It is a convincing voice; few works share this genuine moral passion.

It is, in short, a clear call to rouse oneself from the life of sloth, indolence and thoughtlessness of the common man, to achieve that greatest of all conquests, the conquest of self, to escape from the snares of evil passions, lust, hatred and anger, and to attain that highest human freedom, the moral freedom of one who has overcome himself. But this call for moral effort and struggle is coupled with a sense of urgency of escape and gives us the sensation of a race, as with St. Paul:

Earnest among the thoughtless, awake among the sleepers, the wise man advances like a racer, leaving behind the hack.

Again:

He whose conquests cannot be conquered again, into whose conquest no one in this world enters, by what track can you lead him, the Awakened, the Omniscient, the trackless?

He whom no desire with its snares and poisons can lead astray, by what track can you lead him, the Awakened, the Omniscient, the trackless?

And why? Because all of us know that the body is transient, and all of us are seeking salvation:

Long is the night to him who is awake; long is the mile to him who is tired; long is life to the foolish who do not know the true law.

Because:

As a cow-herd with his staff drives his cows into the stable, so do Age and Death drive the life of men.

But, because we are subject to the temptations of this illusory world, the foolish keep on living their futile, indolent, weak and licentious life, which is a life in vain, a life not worth having:

And he who lives a hundred years, ignorant and unrestrained, a life of one day is better if a man is wise and reflecting.

And he who lives a hundred years, idle and weak, a life of one day is better if a man has attained firm strength. . . .

And he who lives a hundred years, not seeing the highest law, a life of one day is better if a man sees the highest law.

It is entirely possible for one to grow "old in vain":

A man is not an elder because his head is gray; his age may be ripe, but he is called "Old-in-Vain."

For there is such a thing as moral growth:

A man who has learnt little, grows old like an ox; his flesh grows, but his knowledge does not grow.

Hence we hear the clarion call to rouse oneself from that life of moral sloth and indolence and futile mischief:

Rouse thyself! Do not be idle! Follow the law of virtue!
The virtuous rest in bliss in this life and in the next.
Come, look at this world, glittering like a royal chariot;
The foolish are immersed in it, but the wise do not touch it.

The first and last step is the conquest of self:

Rouse thyself by thyself, examine thyself by thyself; thus self-protected and attentive wilt thou live happily, O Bikkshu!

For self is the lord of self, self is the refuge of self; therefore curb thyself as the merchant curbs a noble horse.

Mules are good, if tamed, and the noble Sindhu horses, and elephants with large tusks; but he who tames himself is better still.

For with these animals does no man reach the untrodden country (Nirvāna), where a tamed man goes on a tamed animal!—on his well-tamed self.

This essential thought recurs again and again, like a theme in a symphony:

If one man conquer in battle a thousand times a thousand men, and if another conquer himself, he is the greatest of conquerors.

The process of salvation must come from within:

By one's self the evil is done, by one's self one suffers; by one's self evil is left undone, by one's self one is purified. The pure and the impure stand and fall by themselves, *no one can purify another.*

Hence Buddha's call for constant vigilance and individual effort:

You yourself must make an effort. The Tathāgatas (Buddhas) are only preachers. The thoughtful who enter the way are freed from the bondage of Māra . . .

And I like something which is so simple, so direct:

If anything is to be done, let a man do it, let him attack it vigorously! A careless pilgrim only scatters the dust of his passion more widely.

But one has first to rid oneself of the illusions of the false life and attain a moral height, from which he can see a different world:

When the learned man drives away vanity by earnestness, he, the wise, climbing the terraced heights of wisdom, looks down upon the fools: free from sorrow he looks upon the sorrowing crowd, as one that stands on a mountain looks down upon them that stand upon the plain.

Curiously, salvation comes from knowledge:

The channels run everywhere, the creeper of passion stands sprouting; if you see the creeper springing up, *cut its root by means of knowledge.*

Or again:

Knowing that this body is fragile like a jar, and making his thought firm like a fortress, one should attack Māra, the tempter, *with the weapon of knowledge,* one should watch him when conquered, and should never rest.

Because the greatest of all evils is the evil of ignorance:

But there is a taint worse than all taints—ignorance is the greatest taint. O mendicants, throw off that taint, and become taintless!

The evil life is really the *thoughtless* life:

Earnestness is the path of immortality (Nirvāna), thoughtlessness the path of death. Those who are in earnest do not die, those who are thoughtless are as if dead already.

For after all, evil and pain are identical; it is those unable to see pain as the natural result of doing evil that continue to do evil:

If a man commits a sin, let him not do it again; let him not delight in sin: *the accumulation of evil is painful.*

And good and happiness are identical:

If a man does what is good, let him do it again, let him delight in it: *the accumulation of good is delightful.*

For the virtuous man alone is happy, for he has that happiness which cannot be taken away from him:

The virtuous man is happy in this world, and he is happy in the next; he is happy in both. He is happy when he thinks of the good he has done; he is still more happy when going on the good path.

Again:

We live happily indeed, not hating those who hate us! among men who hate us we dwell free from hatred!

We live happily indeed, free from greed among the greedy! among men who are greedy let us dwell free from greed!

We live happily indeed, though we call nothing our own! We shall be like the bright gods, feeding on happiness!

For the power of good pervades:

The scent of flowers does not travel against the wind, nor that of sandalwood, or of Tagara and Mallikā flowers; but the odor of good people travels even against the wind; a good man pervades every place.

Again:

Good people are seen from afar, like the snowy mountains; bad people are not seen, like arrows shot by night.

The good man, who has achieved freedom from the senses, is even worthy of the envy of the gods:

The gods even envy him whose senses, like horses well broken in by the driver, have been subdued, who is free from pride, and free from appetites; such a one who does his duty is tolerant like the earth, like the threshold; he is like a lake without mud; no new births are in store for him.

And there we reach the spiritual joy of the calm, saintly life, strong above the trammels of passion and worldly cares:

The gift of the law exceeds all gifts; the sweetness of the law exceeds all sweetness; the delight in the law exceeds all delights; the extinction of thirst overcomes all pain.

Again, we hear the note of inner peace:

A Bikkshu who has entered his empty house, and whose mind is tranquil, feels more than a human delight when he sees the law clearly.

That is why one must allow no thoughts of hatred, anger and lust to enter the mind, and why one must not requite evil with evil, but must overcome evil with good:

He who holds back rising anger like a rolling chariot, him I call a real driver; other people are but holding the reins.

Let a man overcome anger by love, let him overcome evil by good; let him overcome the greedy by liberality, the liar by truth!

For the man who is tainted with hatred and anger, or who injures others but injures himself:

If a man offend a harmless, pure, and innocent person, the evil falls back upon that fool, like light dust thrown up against the wind.

What the world calls victory is not victory, because it breeds more hatred:

Victory breeds hatred, for the conquered is unhappy. He who has given up both victory and defeat, he, the contented, is happy.

For what the saint prizes and values is moral victory:

Silently I endured abuse as the elephant in battle endures the arrow sent from the bow: for the world is ill-natured.

They lead a tamed elephant to battle, the king mounts a tamed elephant; the tamed is the best among men, he who silently endures abuse.

Here we reach the moral heights of the Sermon on the Mount. And having disabused our minds of the common passions of men, we arrive at a new set of moral values, the values of the inner life:

A man is not learned because he talks much; he who is patient, free from hatred and fear, he is called learned.

A man is not an elect (Ariya) because he injures living creatures; because he has pity on all living creatures, therefore is a man called Ariya.

The ordinary conventional values of society do not hold any more:

A man does not become a Brahmana by his plaited hair, by his family, or by birth; in whom there is truth and righteousness, he is blessed, he is a Brahmana.

I do not call a man a Brahmana because of his origin or of his mother. He is indeed arrogant, and he is wealthy; but the poor who is free from attachments, him I call indeed a Brahmana.

The externals of the religious practice are no substitutes for the inner spiritual life, for priests also go to hell:

Many men whose shoulders are covered with the yellow gown are ill-conditioned and unrestrained; such evil-doers by their evil deeds go to hell.

Better it would be to swallow a heated iron ball, like flaring fire, than that a bad, unrestrained fellow should live on the charity of the land.

Such are the main themes that occur again and again in the *Dhammapada*. While such doctrines afford no more glimpse into Buddhist philosophy than the Sermon on the Mount affords any glimpse of Christian theology, they are the central ethical teachings of Buddhism. Here we

do not run into abstruse metaphysics (see the section, *The Surangama Sutra*), but see on the other hand, the clarity, the simplicity and great humanity of Buddha's teachings, a humanity that is easy to appreciate:

If the occasion rises, friends are pleasant; enjoyment is pleasant, whatever be the cause; a good work is pleasant in the hour of death; the giving up of grief is pleasant.

Pleasant in the world is the state of a mother; pleasant the state of a father; pleasant the state of a Samana (ascetic); pleasant the state of a Brahmana.

Pleasant is virtue lasting to old age; pleasant is a faith firmly rooted; pleasant is attainment of intelligence; pleasant is avoiding of sin.

The following translation was made by Max Müller in 1870. There have been a number of succeeding efforts to re-translate the *Dhammapada*, by F. L. Woodward (1921), and by Wagiswara and Saunders (1920) in prose, and by A. L. Edmunds in verse (*Hymns of the Faith*, 1902), for this unique work has attracted many scholars. The late Irving Babbitt's translation is based on the version by Max Müller.[1] Some translators may have improved upon Max Müller in literalness, but I doubt very much in aptness of expression or in producing the smooth-flowing rhythm, for as must be evident to the reader, the great translator was concerned not only with the words, as scholars are, but had a pleasing acquaintance with the sense of words. The Chinese version of the *Dhammapada* has been rendered into English by Samuel Beal (*Texts from the Buddhist Canon known as Dhammapada*, London and Boston, 1878). Its closeness to Confucian and Taoist teachings (e.g., advice on good friends, distinction between the wise and the fools, emphasis on self-examination, freedom from fear, moral strength and inner repose) explains why Buddhism is so readily acceptable to the Chinese people.

The *Dhammapada* is a great spiritual testimony, one of the very few religious masterpieces in the world, combining genuineness of spiritual passion with a happy gift of literary expression. It is closer to the modern man than the *Bhagavad-Gita;* the latter, with all its lofty moral conceptions, is bound to strike deeper a Hindu than a non-Hindu mind, while the *Dhammapada* speaks directly on common ethical terms, such as many a self-made man would like to present to his licentious-living son, but usually has not the courage to because he is his own father. The *Dhammapada* therefore belongs to the world and to all time.

[1] Published posthumously, Oxford, 1936. It contains a valuable essay by Babbitt on *Buddha and the Occident*. What interests Babbitt in Buddhism is the emphasis on the principle of the "inner check" and self-mastery.

The Dhammapada

Translated by F. Max Müller

CHAPTER I: THE TWIN-VERSES

ALL THAT WE ARE is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him, as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage.

All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him, like a shadow that never leaves him.

"He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me"—in those who harbor such thoughts hatred will never cease.

"He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me"—in those who do not harbor such thoughts hatred will cease.

For hatred does not cease by hatred at any time: hatred ceases by love—this is an old rule.

The world does not know that we must all come to an end here; but those who know it, their quarrels cease at once.

He who lives looking for pleasures only, his senses uncontrolled, immoderate in his food, idle, and weak, Māra (the tempter) will certainly overthrow him, as the wind throws down a weak tree.

He who lives without looking for pleasures, his senses well controlled, moderate in his food, faithful and strong, him Māra will certainly not overthrow, any more than the wind throws down a rocky mountain.

He who wishes to put on the yellow dress without having cleansed himself from sin, who disregards also temperance and truth, is unworthy of the yellow dress.

But he who has cleansed himself from sin, is well grounded in all virtues, and endowed also with temperance and truth: he is indeed worthy of the yellow dress.

They who imagine truth in untruth, and see untruth in truth, never arrive at truth, but follow vain desires.

They who know truth in truth, and untruth in untruth, arrive at truth, and follow true desires.

As rain breaks through an ill-thatched house, passion will break through an unreflecting mind.

As rain does not break through a well-thatched house, passion will not break through a well-reflecting mind.

The evil-doer mourns in this world, and he mourns in the next; he mourns in both. He mourns and suffers when he sees the evil result of his own work.

The virtuous man delights in this world, and he delights in the next; he delights in both. He delights and rejoices, when he sees the purity of his own work.

The evil-doer suffers in this world, and he suffers in the next; he suffers in both. He suffers when he thinks of the evil he has done; he suffers more when going on the evil path.

The virtuous man is happy in this world, and he is happy in the next; he is happy in both. He is happy when he thinks of the good he has done; he is still more happy when going on the good path.

The thoughtless man, even if he can recite a large portion of the law, but is not a doer of it, has no share in the priesthood, but is like a cow-herd counting the cows of others.

The follower of the law, even if he can recite only a small portion of the law, but, having forsaken passion and hatred and foolishness, possesses true knowledge and serenity of mind, he, caring for nothing in this world or that to come, has indeed a share in the priesthood.

CHAPTER II: ON EARNESTNESS

Earnestness is the path of immortality (Nirvāna), thoughtlessness the path of death. Those who are in earnest do not die, those who are thoughtless are as if dead already.

Having understood this clearly, those who are advanced in earnestness delight in earnestness, and rejoice in the knowledge of the elect.

These wise people, meditative, steady, always possessed of strong powers, attain to Nirvāna, the highest happiness.

If an earnest person has roused himself, if he is not forgetful, if his deeds are pure, if he acts with consideration, if he restrains himself, and lives according to law—then his glory will increase.

By rousing himself, by earnestness, by restraint and control, the wise man may make for himself an island which no flood can overwhelm.

Fools follow after vanity. The wise man keeps earnestness as his best jewel.

Follow not after vanity, nor after the enjoyment of love and lust! He who is earnest and meditative, obtains ample joy.

When the learned man drives away vanity by earnestness, he, the wise, climbing the terraced heights of wisdom, looks down upon the fools: free from sorrow he looks upon the sorrowing crowd, as one that stands on a mountain looks down upon them that stand upon the plain.

Earnest among the thoughtless, awake among the sleepers, the wise man advances like a racer, leaving behind the hack.

By earnestness did Maghavan (Indra) rise to the lordship of the gods. People praise earnestness; thoughtlessness is always blamed.

A Bhikshu (mendicant) who delights in earnestness, who looks with fear on thoughtlessness, moves about like fire, burning all his fetters, small or large.

A Bhikshu (mendicant) who delights in reflection, who looks with fear on thoughtlessness, cannot fall away from his perfect state—he is close upon Nirvāna.

CHAPTER III: THOUGHT

As A FLETCHER makes straight his arrow, a wise man makes straight his trembling and unsteady thought, which is difficult to guard, difficult to hold back.

As a fish taken from his watery home and thrown on the dry ground, our thought trembles all over in order to escape the dominion of Māra, the tempter.

It is good to tame the mind, which is difficult to hold in and flighty, rushing wherever it listeth; a tamed mind brings happiness.

Let the wise man guard his thoughts, for they are difficult to perceive, very artful, and they rush wherever they list: thoughts well guarded bring happiness.

Those who bridle their mind which travels far, moves about alone,

is without a body, and hides in the chamber of the heart, will be free from the bonds of Māra, the tempter.

If a man's faith is unsteady, if he does not know the true law, if his peace of mind is troubled, his knowledge will never be perfect.

If a man's thoughts are not dissipated, if his mind is not perplexed, if he has ceased to think of good or evil, then there is no fear for him while he is watchful.

Knowing that this body is fragile like a jar, and making his thought firm like a fortress, one should attack Māra, the tempter, with the weapon of knowledge, one should watch him when conquered, and should never rest.

Before long, alas! this body will lie on the earth, despised, without understanding, like a useless log.

Whatever a hater may do to a hater, or an enemy to an enemy, a wrongly-directed mind will do him greater mischief.

Not a mother, not a father, will do so much, nor any other relatives; a well-directed mind will do us greater service.

CHAPTER IV: FLOWERS

WHO SHALL OVERCOME this earth, and the world of Yama, the lord of the departed, and the world of the gods? Who shall find out the plainly shown path of virtue, as a clever man finds the right flower?

The disciple will overcome the earth, and the world of Yama, and the world of the gods. The disciple will find out the plainly shown path of virtue, as a clever man finds the right flower.

He who knows that this body is like froth, and has learnt that it is as unsubstantial as a mirage, will break the flower-pointed arrow of Māra, and never see the king of death.

Death carries off a man who is gathering flowers, and whose mind is distracted, as a flood carries off a sleeping village.

Death subdues a man who is gathering flowers, and whose mind is distracted, before he is satiated in his pleasures.

As the bee collects nectar and departs without injuring the flower, or its color or scent, so let a sage dwell in his village.

Not the perversities of others, not their sins of commission or omission, but his own misdeeds and negligences should a sage take notice of.

Like a beautiful flower, full of color, but without scent, are the fine but fruitless words of him who does not act accordingly.

But, like a beautiful flower, full of color and full of scent, are the fine and fruitful words of him who acts accordingly.

As many kinds of wreaths can be made from a heap of flowers, so many good things may be achieved by a mortal when once he is born.

The scent of flowers does not travel against the wind, nor that of sandal-wood, or of Tagara and Mallikā flowers; but the odor of good people travels even against the wind; a good man pervades every place.

Sandal-wood or Tagara, a lotus-flower, or a Vassikī, among these sorts of perfumes, the perfume of virtue is unsurpassed.

Mean is the scent that comes from Tagara and sandal-wood; the perfume of those who possess virtue rises up to the gods as the highest.

Of the people who possess these virtues, who live without thoughtlessness, and who are emancipated through true knowledge, Māra, the tempter, never finds the way.

As on a heap of rubbish cast upon the highway the lily will grow full of sweet perfume and delight, thus among those who are mere rubbish the disciple of the truly enlightened Buddha shines forth by his knowledge above the blinded worldling.

CHAPTER V: THE FOOL

LONG IS THE NIGHT to him who is awake; long is a mile to him who is tired; long is life to the foolish who do not know the true law.

If a traveller does not meet with one who is his better, or his equal, let him firmly keep to his solitary journey; there is no companionship with a fool.

"These sons belong to me, and this wealth belongs to me," with such thoughts a fool is tormented. He himself does not belong to himself; how much less sons and wealth?

The fool who knows his foolishness, is wise at least so far. But a fool who thinks himself wise, he is called a fool indeed.

If a fool be associated with a wise man even all his life, he will perceive the truth as little as a spoon perceives the taste of soup.

If an intelligent man be associated for one minute only with a wise man, he will soon perceive the truth, as the tongue perceives the taste of soup.

Fools of poor understanding have themselves for their greatest enemies, for they do evil deeds which bear bitter fruits.

That deed is not well done of which a man must repent, and the reward of which he receives crying and with a tearful face.

No, that deed is well done of which a man does not repent, and the reward of which he receives gladly and cheerfully.

As long as the evil deed done does not bear fruit, the fool thinks it is like honey; but when it ripens, then the fool suffers grief.

Let a fool month after month eat his food (like an ascetic) with the tip of a blade of Kusa-grass, yet is he not worth the sixteenth particle of those who have well weighed the law.

An evil deed, like newly-drawn milk, does not turn suddenly; smouldering, like fire covered by ashes, it follows the fool.

And when the evil deed, after it has become known, turns to sorrow for the fool, then it destroys his bright lot, nay, it cleaves his head.

Let the fool wish for a false reputation, for precedence among the Bhikshus, for lordship in the convents, for worship among other people!

"May both the layman and he who has left the world think that this is done by me; may they be subject to me in everything which is to be done or is not to be done," thus is the mind of the fool, and his desire and pride increase.

"One is the road that leads to wealth, another the road that leads to Nirvāna"—if the Bhikshu, the disciple of Buddha, has learnt this, he will not yearn for honor, he will strive after separation from the world.

CHAPTER VI: THE WISE MAN

IF YOU SEE A MAN who shows you what is to be avoided, who administers reproofs, and is intelligent, follow that wise man as you would one who tells of hidden treasures; it will be better, not worse, for him who follows him.

Let him admonish, let him teach, let him forbid what is improper!—he will be beloved of the good, by the bad he will be hated.

Do not have evil-doers for friends, do not have low people for friends: have virtuous people for friends, have for friends the best of men.

He who drinks in the law lives happily with a serene mind: the sage rejoices always in the law, as preached by the elect.

Well-makers lead the water wherever they like; fletchers bend the arrow; carpenters bend a log of wood; wise people fashion themselves.

As a solid rock is not shaken by the wind, wise people falter not amidst blame and praise.

Wise people, after they have listened to the laws, become serene, like a deep, smooth, and still lake.

Good men indeed walk warily under all circumstances; good men speak not out of a desire for sensual gratification; whether touched by happiness or sorrow wise people never appear elated or depressed.

If, whether for his own sake, or for the sake of others, a man wishes neither for a son, nor for wealth, nor for lordship, and if he does not wish for his own success by unfair means, then he is good, wise, and virtuous.

Few are there among men who arrive at the other shore (become Arhats); the other people here run up and down the shore.

But those who, when the law has been well preached to them, follow the law, will pass over the dominion of death, however difficult to cross.

A wise man should leave the dark state of ordinary life, and follow the bright state of the Bhikshu. After going from his home to a homeless state, he should in his retirement look for enjoyment where enjoyment seemed difficult. Leaving all pleasures behind, and calling nothing his own, the wise man should purge himself from all the troubles of the mind.

Those whose mind is well grounded in the seven elements of knowledge, who without clinging to anything, rejoice in freedom from attachment, whose appetites have been conquered, and who are full of light, they are free even in this world.

CHAPTER VII: THE VENERABLE

THERE IS NO SUFFERING for him who has finished his journey, and abandoned grief, who has freed himself on all sides, and thrown off all fetters.

They exert themselves with their thoughts well-collected, they do not tarry in their abode; like swans who have left their lake, they leave their house and home.

Men who have no riches, who live on recognized food, who have perceived void and unconditioned freedom (Nirvāna), their path is difficult to understand, like that of birds in the air.

He whose appetites are stilled, who is not absorbed in enjoyment, who has perceived void and unconditioned freedom (Nirvāna), his path is difficult to understand, like that of birds in the air.

The gods even envy him whose senses, like horses well broken in by the driver, have been subdued, who is free from pride, and free from

appetites; such a one who does his duty is tolerant like the earth, or like a threshold; he is like a lake without mud; no new births are in store for him.

His thought is quiet, quiet are his word and deed, when he has obtained freedom by true knowledge, when he has thus become a quiet man.

The man who is free from credulity, but knows the uncreated, who has cut all ties, removed all temptations, renounced all desires, he is the greatest of men.

In a hamlet or in a forest, on sea or on dry land, wherever venerable persons (Arahanta) dwell, that place is delightful.

Forests are delightful; where the world finds no delight, there the passionless will find delight, for they look not for pleasures.

CHAPTER VIII: THE THOUSANDS

EVEN THOUGH A SPEECH be a thousand (of words), but made up of senseless words, one word of sense is better, which if a man hears, he becomes quiet.

Even though a Gāthā (poem) be a thousand (of words), but made up of senseless words, one word of a Gāthā is better, which if a man hears, he becomes quiet.

Though a man recite a hundred Gāthās made up of senseless words, one word of the law is better, which if a man hears, he becomes quiet.

If one man conquer in battle a thousand times a thousand men, and if another conquer himself, he is the greatest of conquerors.

One's own self conquered is better than all other people; not even a god, a Gandharva, not Māra (with Brāhman), could change into defeat the victory of a man who has vanquished himself, and always lives under restraint.

If a man for a hundred years sacrifice month by month with a thousand, and if he but for one moment pay homage to a man whose soul is grounded in true knowledge, better is that homage than a sacrifice for a hundred years.

If a man for a hundred years worship Agni (fire) in the forest, and if he but for one moment pay homage to a man whose soul is grounded in true knowledge, better is that homage than sacrifice for a hundred years.

Whatever a man sacrifice in this world as an offering or as an oblation for a whole year in order to gain merit, the whole of it is not

worth a quarter a farthing; reverence shown to the righteous is better.

He who always greets and constantly reveres the aged, four things will increase to him: life, beauty, happiness, power.

But he who lives a hundred years, vicious and unrestrained, a life of one day is better if a man is virtuous and reflecting.

And he who lives a hundred years, ignorant and unrestrained, a life of one day is better if a man is wise and reflecting.

And he who lives a hundred years, idle and weak, a life of one day is better if a man has attained firm strength.

And he who lives a hundred years, not seeing beginning and end, a life of one day is better if a man sees beginning and end.

And he who lives a hundred years, not seeing the immortal place, a life of one day is better if a man sees the immortal place.

And he who lives a hundred years, not seeing the highest law, a life of one day is better if a man sees the highest law.

CHAPTER IX: EVIL

A MAN should hasten towards towards the good, and should keep his thought away from evil; if a man does what is good slothfully, his mind delights in evil.

If a man commits a sin, let him not do it again; let him not delight in sin: the accumulation of evil is painful.

If a man does what is good, let him do it again; let him delight in it: the accumulation of good is delightful.

Even an evil-doer sees happiness so long as his evil deed does not ripen; but when his evil deed ripens, then does the evil-doer see evil.

Even a good man sees evil days so long as his good deed does not ripen; but when his good deed ripens, then does the good man see good things.

Let no man think lightly of evil, saying in his heart, It will not come nigh unto me. Even by the falling of water-drops a water-pot is filled; the fool becomes full of evil, even if he gather it little by little.

Let no man think lightly of good, saying in his heart, It will not come nigh unto me. Even by the falling of water-drops a water-pot is filled; the wise man becomes full of good, even if he gather it little by little.

Let a man avoid evil deeds, as a merchant, if he has few companions and carries much wealth, avoids a dangerous road; as a man who loves life avoids poison.

He who has no wound on his hand, may touch poison with his hand; poison does not affect one who has no wound; nor is there evil for one who does not commit evil.

If a man offend a harmless, pure, and innocent person, the evil falls back upon that fool, like light dust thrown up against the wind.

Some people are born again; evil-doers go to hell; righteous people go to heaven; those who are free from all worldly desires attain Nirvāna.

Not in the sky, not in the midst of the sea, not if we enter into the clefts of the mountains, is there known a spot in the whole world where a man might be freed from an evil deed.

Not in the sky, not in the midst of the sea, not if we enter into the clefts of the mountains, is there known a spot in the whole world where death could not overcome the mortal.

CHAPTER X: PUNISHMENT

ALL MEN tremble at punishment, all men fear death; remember that you are like unto them, and do not kill, nor cause slaughter.

All men tremble at punishment, all men love life; remember that thou art like unto them, and do not kill, nor cause slaughter.

He who, seeking his own happiness, punishes or kills beings who also long for happiness, will not find happiness after death.

He who, seeking his own happiness, does not punish or kill beings who also long for happiness, will find happiness after death.

Do not speak harshly to anyone; those who are spoken to will answer thee in the same way. Angry speech is painful: blows for blows will touch thee.

If, like a shattered metal plate (gong), thou utter nothing, then thou hast reached Nirvāna; anger is not known to thee.

As a cow-herd with his staff drives his cows into the stable, so do Age and Death drive the life of men.

A fool does not know when he commits his evil deeds: but the wicked man burns by his own deeds, as if burnt by fire.

He who inflicts pain on innocent and harmless persons, will soon come to one of these ten states:—

He will have cruel suffering, loss, injury of the body, heavy affliction, or loss of mind.

A misfortune coming from the king, or a fearful accusation, or loss of relations, or destruction of treasures.

Lightning-fire will burn his houses; and when his body is destroyed, the fool will go to hell.

Not nakedness, not platted hair, not dirt, not fasting, or lying on the earth, not rubbing with dust, not sitting motionless, can purify a mortal who has not overcome desires.

He who, though dressed in fine apparel, exercises tranquility, is quiet, subdued, restrained, chaste, and has ceased to find fault with all other beings, he indeed is a Brāhmana, an ascetic (sramana), a friar (bhikshu).

Is there in this world any man so restrained by shame that he does not provoke reproof, as a noble horse the whip?

Like a noble horse when touched by the whip, be ye strenuous and eager, and by faith, by virtue, by energy, by meditation, by discernment of the law, you will overcome this great pain, perfect in knowledge and in behavior, and never forgetful.

Well-makers lead the water wherever they like; fletchers bend the arrow; carpenters bend a log of wood; good people fashion themselves.

CHAPTER XI: OLD AGE

How is there laughter, how is there joy, as this world is always burning? Do you not seek a light, ye who are surrounded by darkness?

Look at this dressed-up lump, covered with wounds, joined together, sickly, full of many schemes, but which has no strength, no hold!

This body is wasted, full of sickness, and frail; this heap of corruption breaks to pieces, life indeed ends in death.

After one has looked at those gray bones, thrown away like gourds in the autumn, what pleasure is there left in life!

After a stronghold has been made of the bones, it is covered with flesh and blood, and there dwell in it old age and death, pride and deceit.

The brilliant chariots of kings are destroyed, the body also approaches destruction, but the virtue of good people never approaches destruction—thus do the good say to the good.

A man who has learnt little, grows old like an ox; his flesh grows, but his knowledge does not grow.

Looking for the maker of this tabernacle, I have run through a course of many births, not finding him; and painful is birth again and again. But now, maker of the tabernacle, thou hast been seen; thou shalt not make up this tabernacle again. All thy rafters are broken, thy ridge-pole

is sundered; the mind, approaching the Eternal (visankhāra, nirvāna), has attained to the extinction of all desires.

Men who have not observed proper discipline, and have not gained wealth in their youth, perish like old herons in a lake without fish.

Men who have not observed proper discipline, and have not gained wealth in their youth, lie, like broken bows, sighing after the past.

CHAPTER XII: SELF

IF A MAN HOLD HIMSELF DEAR, let him watch himself carefully; during one at least out of the three watches a wise man should be watchful.

Let each man direct himself first to what is proper, then let him teach others; thus a wise man will not suffer.

If a man make himself as he teaches others to be, then, being himself well subdued, he may subdue others; for one's own self is difficult to subdue.

Self is the lord of self, who else could be the lord? With self well subdued, a man finds a lord such as few can find.

The evil done by one's self, self-forgotten, self-bred, crushes the foolish, as a diamond breaks even a precious stone.

He whose wickedness is very great brings himself down to that state where his enemy wishes him to be, as a creeper does with the tree which it surrounds.

Bad deeds, and deeds hurtful to ourselves, are easy to do; what is beneficial and good, that is very difficult to do.

The foolish man who scorns the rule of the venerable (Arhat), of the elect (Ariya), of the virtuous, and follows a false doctrine, he bears fruit to his own destruction, like the fruits of the Katthaka reed.

By one's self the evil is done, by one's self one suffers; by one's self evil is left undone, by one's self one is purified. The pure and the impure stand and fall by themselves, no one can purify another.

Let no one forget his own duty for the sake of another's, however great; let a man, after he has discerned his own duty, be always attentive to his duty.

CHAPTER XII: THE WORLD

DO NOT FOLLOW the evil law! Do not live on in thoughtlessness! Do not follow false doctrine! Be not a friend of the world.

Rouse thyself! do not be idle! Follow the law of virtue! The virtuous rest in bliss in this world and in the next.

Fellow the law of virtue; do not follow that of sin. The virtuous rest in bliss in this world and in the next.

Look upon the world as you would on a bubble, look upon it as you would on a mirage: the king of death does not see him who thus looks down upon the world.

Come, look at this world, glittering like a royal chariot; the foolish are immersed in it, but the wise do not touch it.

He who formerly was reckless and afterwards became sober, brightens up this world, like the moon when freed from clouds.

He whose evil deeds are covered by good deeds, brightens up this world, like the moon when freed from clouds.

This world is dark, few only can see here; a few only go to heaven, like birds escaped from the net.

The swans go on the path of the sun, they go miraculously through the ether; the wise are led out of this world, when they have conquered Māra and his train.

If a man has transgressed the one law, and speaks lies, and scoffs at another world, there is no evil he will not do.

The uncharitable do not go to the world of the gods; fools only do not praise liberality; a wise man rejoices in liberality, and through it becomes blessed in the other world.

Better than sovereignty over the earth, better than going to heaven, better than lordship over all worlds, is the reward of Sotāpatti, the first step in holiness.

CHAPTER XIV:
THE BUDDHA—THE AWAKENED

He whose conquest cannot be conquered again, into whose conquest no one in this world enters, by what track can you lead him, the Awakened, the Omniscient, the trackless?

He whom no desire with its snares and poisons can lead astray, by what track can you lead him, the Awakened, the Omniscient, the trackless?

Even the gods envy those who are awakened and not forgetful, who are given to meditation, who are wise, and who delight in the repose of retirement from the world.

Difficult to obtain is the conception of men, difficult is the life of mortals, difficult is the hearing of the True Law, difficult is the birth of the Awakened (the attainment of Buddhahood).

Not to commit any sin, to do good, and to purify one's mind, that is the teaching of all the Awakened.

The Awakened call patience the highest penance, long-suffering the highest Nirvāna; for he is not an anchorite (pravragita) who strikes others, he is not an ascetic (sramana) who insults others.

Not to blame, not to strike, to live restrained under the law, to be moderate in eating, to sleep and sit alone, and to dwell on the highest thoughts—this is the teaching of the Awakened.

There is no satisfying lusts, even by a shower of gold pieces; he who knows that lusts have a short taste and cause pain, he is wise; even in heavenly pleasures he finds no satisfaction, the disciple who is fully awakened delights only in the destruction of all desires.

Men, driven by fear, go to many a refuge, to mountains and forests, to groves and sacred trees.

But that is not a safe refuge, that is not the best refuge; a man is not delivered from all pains after having gone to that refuge.

He who takes refuge with Buddha, the Law, and the Church; he who, with clear understanding, sees the four holy truths: pain, the origin of pain, the destruction of pain, and the eightfold holy way that leads to the quieting of pain;—that is the safe refuge, that is the best refuge; having gone to that refuge, a man is delivered from all pain.

A supernatural person (a Buddha) is not easily found: he is not born everywhere. Wherever such a sage is born, that race prospers.

Happy is the arising of the Awakened, happy is the teaching of the True Law, happy is peace in the church, happy is the devotion of those who are at peace.

He who pays homage to those who deserve homage, whether the awakened (Buddha) or their disciples, those who have overcome the host of evils, and crossed the flood of sorrow, he who pays homage to such as have found deliverance and know no fear, his merit can never be measured by anyone.

CHAPTER XV: HAPPINESS

WE LIVE HAPPILY INDEED, not hating those who hate us! among men who hate us we dwell free from hatred! We live happily indeed, free

from ailments among the ailing! among men who are ailing let us dwell free from ailments!

We live happily indeed, free from greed among the greedy! among men who are greedy let us dwell free from greed!

We live happily indeed, though we call nothing our own! We shall be like the bright gods, feeding on happiness!

Victory breeds hatred, for the conquered is unhappy. He who has given up both victory and defeat, he, the contented, is happy.

There is no fire like passion; there is no losing throw like hatred; there is no pain like this body; there is no happiness higher than rest.

Hunger is the worst of diseases, the elements of the body the greatest evil; if one knows this truly, that is Nirvāna, the highest happiness.

Health is the greatest of gifts, contentedness the best riches; trust is the best of relationships, Nirvāna the highest happiness.

He who has tasted the sweetness of solitude and tranquillity, is free from fear and free from sin, while he tastes the sweetness of drinking in the law.

The sight of the elect (Ariya) is good, to live with them is always happiness; if a man does not see fools, he will be truly happy.

He who walks in the company of fools suffers a long way; company with fools, as with an enemy, is always painful; company with the wise is pleasure, like meeting with kinsfolk.

Therefore, one ought to follow the wise, the intelligent, the learned, the much enduring, the dutiful, the elect; one ought to follow such a good and wise man, as the moon follows the path of the stars.

CHAPTER XVI: PLEASURE

He who gives himself to vanity, and does not give himself to meditation, forgetting the real aim of life and grasping at pleasure, will in time envy him who has exerted himself in meditation.

Let no man ever cling to what is pleasant, or to what is unpleasant. Not to see what is pleasant is pain, and it is pain to see what is unpleasant.

Let, therefore, no man love anything; loss of the beloved is evil. Those who love nothing, and hate nothing, have no fetters.

From pleasure comes grief, from pleasures comes fear; he who is free from pleasure knows neither grief nor fear.

From affection comes grief, from affection comes fear; he who is free from affection knows neither grief nor fear.

From lust comes grief, from lust comes fear; he who is free from lust knows neither grief nor fear.

From love comes grief, from love comes fear; he who is free from love knows neither grief nor fear.

From greed comes grief, from greed comes fear; he who is free from greed knows neither grief nor fear.

He who possesses virtue and intelligence, who is just, speaks the truth, and does what is his own business, him the world will hold dear.

He in whom a desire for the Ineffable (Nirvāna) has sprung up, who in his mind is satisfied, and whose thoughts are not bewildered by love, he is called ūrdhvamsrotas (carried upwards by the stream).

Kinsmen, friends, and lovers salute a man who has been long away, and returns safe from afar.

In like manner his good works receive him who has done good, and has gone from this world to the other;—as kinsmen receive a friend on his return.

CHAPTER XVII: ANGER

LET A MAN LEAVE ANGER, let him forsake pride, let him overcome all bondage! No sufferings befall the man who is not attached to name and form, and who calls nothing his own.

He who holds back rising anger like a rolling chariot, him I call a real driver; other people are but holding the reins.

Let a man overcome anger by love, let him overcome evil by good; let him overcome the greedy by liberality, the liar by truth!

Speak the truth, do not yield to anger; give, if thou art asked for little; by these three steps thou wilt go near the gods.

The sages who injure nobody, and who always control their body, they will go to the unchangeable place (Nirvāna), where, if they have gone, they will suffer no more.

Those who are ever watchful, who study day and night, and who strive after Nirvāna, their passions will come to an end.

This is an old saying, O Atula, this is not as if of to-day: "They blame him who sits silent, they blame him who speaks much, they also blame him who says little; there is no one on earth who is not blamed."

There never was, there never will be, nor is there now, a man who is always blamed, or a man who is always praised.

But he whom those who discriminate praise continually day after day,

as without blemish, wise, rich in knowledge and virtue, who would dare to blame him, like a coin made of gold from the Gambū river? Even the gods praise him, he is praised even by Brāhman.

Beware of bodily anger, and control thy body! Leave the sins of the body, and with thy body practise virtue!

Beware of the anger of the tongue, and control thy tongue! Leave the sins of the tongue, and practise virtue with thy tongue!

Beware of the anger of the mind, and control thy mind! Leave the sins of the mind, and practise virtue with thy mind!

The wise who control their body, who control their tongue, the wise who control their mind, are indeed well controlled.

CHAPTER XVIII: IMPURITY

THOU ART NOW like a sear leaf, the messengers of death (Yama) have come near to thee; thou standest at the door of thy departure, and thou hast no provision for thy journey.

Make thyself an island, work hard, be wise! When thy impurities are blown away, and thou art free from guilt, thou wilt enter into the heavenly world of the elect (Ariya).

Thy life has come to an end, thou art come near to death (Yama), there is no resting-place for thee on the road, and thou hast no provision for thy journey.

Make thyself an island, work hard, be wise! When thy impurities are blown away, and thou art free from guilt, thou wilt not enter again into birth and decay.

Let a wise man blow off the impurities of himself, as a smith blows off the impurities of silver, one by one, little by little, and from time to time.

As the impurity which springs from the iron, when it springs from it, destroys it; thus do a transgressor's own works lead him to the evil path.

The taint of prayers is non-repetition; the taint of houses, non-repair; the taint of complexion is sloth; the taint of a watchman, thoughtlessness.

Bad conduct is the taint of woman, niggardliness the taint of a benefactor; tainted are all evil ways, in this world and in the next.

But there is a taint worse than all taints—ignorance is the greatest taint. O mendicants! throw off that taint, and become taintless!

Life is easy to live for a man who is without shame: a crow hero, a mischief-maker, an insulting, bold, and wretched fellow.

But life is hard to live for a modest man, who always looks for what is pure, who is disinterested, quiet, spotless, and intelligent.

He who destroys life, who speaks untruth, who in the world takes what is not given him, who goes to another man's wife; and the man who gives himself to drinking intoxicating liquors, he, even in this world, digs up his own root.

O man, know this, that the unrestrained are in a bad state; take care that greediness and vice do not bring thee to grief for a long time!

The world gives according to their faith or according to their pleasure: if a man frets about the food and the drink given to others, he will find no rest either by day or by night.

He in whom that feeling is destroyed, and taken out with the very root, finds rest by day and by night.

There is no fire like passion, there is no shark like hatred, there is no snare like folly, there is no torrent like greed.

The fault of others is easily perceived, but that of one's self is difficult to perceive; a man winnows his neighbor's faults like chaff, but his own fault he hides, as a cheat hides the bad die from the player.

If a man looks after the faults of others, and is always inclined to be offended, his own passions will grow, and he is far from the destruction of passions.

There is no path through the air, a man is not a Samana outwardly. The world delights in vanity, the Tathāgatas (the Buddhas) are free from vanity.

There is no path through the air, a man is not a Samana outwardly. No creatures are eternal; but the awakened (Buddha) are never shaken.

CHAPTER XIX: THE JUST

A MAN IS NOT JUST if he carries a matter by violence; no, he who distinguishes both right and wrong, who is learned and guides others, not by violence, but by the same law, being a guardian of the law and intelligent, he is called just.

A man is not learned because he talks much; he who is patient, free from hatred and fear, he is called learned.

A man is not a supporter of the law because he talks much; even if a man has learnt little, but sees the law bodily, he is a supporter of the law, a man who never neglects the law.

A man is not an elder because his head is gray; his age may be ripe, but he is called "Old-in-vain."

He in whom there is truth, virtue, pity, restraint, moderation, he who is free from impurity and is wise, he is called an elder.

An envious, stingy, dishonest man does not become respectable by means of much talking only, or by the beauty of his complexion.

He in whom all this is destroyed, and taken out with the very root, he, when freed from hatred, is called respectable.

Not by tonsure does an undisciplined man who speaks falsehood become a Samana [1]; can a man be a Samana who is still held captive by desire and greediness?

He who always quiets the evil, whether small or large, he is called a Samana (a quiet man), because he has quieted all evil.

A man is not a mendicant (Bhikshu) simply because he asks others for alms; he who adopts the whole law is a Bhikshu, not he who only begs.

He who is above good and evil, who is chaste, who with care passes through the world, he indeed is called a Bhikshu.

A man is not a Muni [2] because he observes silence if he is foolish and ignorant; but the wise who, as with the balance, chooses the good and avoids evil, he is a Muni, and is a Muni thereby; he who in this world weighs both sides is called a Muni.

A man is not an elect (Ariya) because he injures living creatures; because he has pity on all living creatures, therefore is a man called Ariya.

Not only by discipline and vows, not only by much learning, not by entering into a trance, not by sleeping alone, do I earn the happiness of release which no worldling can know. O Bhikshu, he who has obtained the extinction of desires, has obtained confidence.

CHAPTER XX: THE WAY

THE BEST OF WAYS is the eightfold [3]; the best of truths the four words [4]; the best of virtues passionlessness; the best of men he who has eyes to see.

This is the way, there is no other that leads to the purifying of intelligence. Go on this path! This is the confusion of Māra, the tempter.

[1] Pali form of Sanskrit *Sramana,* an ascetic.

[2] A holy sage.

[3] Right Doctrine, Right Purpose, Right Discourse, Right Behavior, Right Purity, Right Thought, Right Solitude, Right Rapture.

[4] See Chap. XIV.

If you go on this way, you will make an end of pain! The way preached by me, when I had understood the removal of the thorns in the flesh.

You yourself must make an effort. The Tathāgatas (Buddhas) are only preachers. The thoughtful who enter the way are freed from the bondage of Māra.

"All created things perish," he who knows and sees this becomes passive in pain; this is the way to purity.

"All created things are grief and pain," he who knows and sees this becomes passive in pain; this is the way that leads to purity.

"All forms are unreal," he who knows and sees this becomes passive in pain; this is the way that leads to purity.

He who does not rouse himself when it is time to rise, who, though young and strong, is full of sloth, whose will and thought are weak, that lazy and idle man never finds the way to knowledge.

Watching his speech, well restrained in mind, let a man never commit any wrong with his body! Let a man but keep these three roads of action clear, and he will achieve the way which is taught by the wise.

Through zeal knowledge is gained, through lack of zeal knowledge is lost; let a man who knows this double path of gain and loss thus place himself that knowledge may grow.

Cut down the whole forest of desires, not a tree only! Danger comes out of the forest of desires. When you have cut down both the forest of desires and its undergrowth, then, Bhikshus, you will be rid of the forest and of desires!

So long as the desire of man towards women, even the smallest, is not destroyed, so long is his mind in bondage, as the calf that drinks milk is to its mother.

Cut out the love of self, like an autumn lotus, with thy hand! Cherish the road of peace. Nirvāna has been shown by Sugata (Buddha).

"Here I shall dwell in the rain, here in winter and summer," thus the fool meditates, and does not think of death.

Death comes and carries off that man, honored for his children and flocks, his mind distracted, as a flood carries off a sleeping village.

Sons are no help, nor a father, nor relations; there is no help from kinsfolk for one whom death has seized.

A wise and well-behaved man who knows the meaning of this, should quickly clear the way that leads to Nirvāna.

CHAPTER XXI: MISCELLANEOUS

IF BY LEAVING A SMALL PLEASURE one sees a great pleasure, let a wise man leave the small pleasure, and look to the great.

He who, by causing pain to others, wishes to obtain pleasure for himself, he, entangled in the bonds of hatred, will never be free from hatred.

What ought to be done is neglected, what ought not to be done is done; the desires of unruly, thoughtless people are always increasing.

But they whose whole watchfulness is always directed to their body, who do not follow what ought not to be done, and who steadfastly do what ought to be done, the desires of such watchful and wise people will come to an end.

A true Brāhmana goes scathless, though he have killed father and mother, and two valiant kings, though he has destroyed a kingdom with all its subjects.

A true Brāhmana goes scathless, though he have killed father and mother, and two holy kings, and an eminent man besides.

The disciples of Gotama (Buddha) are always well awake, and their thoughts day and night are always set on Buddha.

The disciples of Gotama are always well awake, and their thoughts day and night are always set on the law.

The disciples of Gotama are always well awake, and their thoughts day and night are always set on the church.

The disciples of Gotama are always well awake, and their thoughts day and night are always set on their body.

The disciples of Gotama are always well awake, and their mind day and night always delights in compassion.

The disciples of Gotama are always well awake, and their mind day and night always delights in meditation.

It is hard to leave the world to become a friar, it is hard to enjoy the world; hard is the monastery, painful are the houses; painful it is to dwell with equals to share everything in common, and the itinerant mendicant is beset with pain. Therefore let no man be an itinerant mendicant, and he will not be beset with pain.

A man full of faith, if endowed with virtue and glory, is respected, whatever place he may choose.

Good people shine from afar, like the snowy mountains; bad people are not seen, like arrows shot by night.

Sitting alone, lying down alone, walking alone without ceasing, and alone subduing himself, let a man be happy near the edge of a forest.

CHAPTER XXII: THE DOWNWARD COURSE

He who says what is not, goes to hell; he also who, having done a thing, says I have not done it. After death both are equal: they are men with evil deeds in the next world.

Many men whose shoulders are covered with the yellow gown [1] are ill-conditioned and unrestrained; such evil-doers by their evil deeds go to hell.

Better it would be to swallow a heated iron ball, like flaring fire, than that a bad unrestrained fellow should live on the charity of the land.

Four things does a reckless man gain who covets his neighbor's wife—demerit, an uncomfortable bed, thirdly, punishment, and lastly, hell.

There is demerit, and the evil way to hell: there is the short pleasure of the frightened in the arms of the frightened, and the king imposes heavy punishment; therefore let no man think of his neighbor's wife.

As a grass-blade, if badly grasped, cuts the arm, badly-practised asceticism leads to hell.

An act carelessly performed, a broken vow, and hesitating obedience to discipline (Brāhma-kariyam), all this brings no great reward.

If anything is to be done, let a man do it, let him attack it vigorously! A careless pilgrim only scatters the dust of his passions more widely.

An evil deed is better left undone, for a man repents of it afterwards; a good deed is better done, for having done it, one does not repent.

Like a well-guarded frontier fort, with defences within and without, so let a man guard himself. Not a moment should escape, for they who allow the right moment to pass, suffer pain when they are in hell.

They who are ashamed of what they ought not to be ashamed of, and are not ashamed of what they ought to be ashamed of, such men, embracing false doctrines, enter the evil path.

They who fear when they ought not to fear, and fear not when they ought to fear, such men, embracing false doctrines, enter the evil path.

They who see sin where there is no sin, and see no sin where there is sin, such men, embracing false doctrines, enter the evil path.

They who see sin where there is sin, and no sin where there is no sin, such men, embracing the true doctrine, enter the good path.

[1] Priests.

CHAPTER XXIII: THE ELEPHANT

SILENTLY I endured abuse as the elephant in battle endures the arrow sent from the bow: for the world is ill-natured.

They lead a tamed elephant to battle, the king mounts a tamed elephant; the tamed is the best among men, he who silently endures abuse.

Mules are good, if tamed, and noble Sindhu horses, and elephants with large tusks; but he who tames himself is better still.

For with these animals does no man reach the untrodden country (Nirvāna), where a tamed man goes on a tamed animal—on his own well-tamed self.

The elephant called Dhanapālaka, his temples running with pungent sap, and who is difficult to hold, does not eat a morsel when bound; the elephant longs for the elephant grove.

If a man becomes fat and a great eater, if he is sleepy and rolls himself about, that fool, like a hog fed on grains, is born again and again.

This mind of mine went formerly wandering about as it liked, as it listed, as it pleased; but I shall now hold it in thoroughly, as the rider who holds the hook holds in the furious elephant.

Be not thoughtless, watch your thoughts! Draw yourself out of the evil way, like an elephant sunk in mud.

If a man find a prudent companion who walks with him, is wise, and lives soberly, he may walk with him, overcoming all dangers, happy, but considerate.

If a man find no prudent companion who walks with him, is wise, and lives soberly, let him walk alone, like a king who has left his conquered country behind—like an elephant in the forest.

It is better to live alone: there is no companionship with a fool; let a man walk alone, let him commit no sin, with few wishes, like an elephant in the forest.

If the occasion arises, friends are pleasant; enjoyment is pleasant, whatever be the cause; a good work is pleasant in the hour of death; the giving up of all grief is pleasant.

Pleasant in the world is the state of a mother, pleasant the state of a father, pleasant the state of a Samana, pleasant the state of a Brāhmana.

Pleasant is virtue lasting to old age, pleasant is a faith firmly rooted; pleasant is attainment of intelligence, pleasant is avoiding of sins.

CHAPTER XXIV: THIRST

THE THIRST of a thoughtless man grows like a creeper; he runs from life to life, like a monkey seeking fruit in the forest.

Whomsoever this fierce poisonous thirst overcomes, in this world, his sufferings increase like the abounding Bīrana grass.

But from him who overcomes this fierce thirst, difficult to be conquered in this world, sufferings fall off, like water-drops from a lotus leaf.

This salutary word I tell you, "Do ye, as many as are here assembled, dig up the root of thirst, as he who wants the sweet-scented Usīra root must dig up the Bīrana grass, that Māra, the tempter, may not crush you again and again, as the stream crushes the reeds."

As a tree, even though it has been cut down, is firm so long as its root is safe, and grows again, thus, unless the feeders of thirst are destroyed, this pain of life will return again and again.

He whose thirty-six streams are strongly flowing in the channels of pleasure, the waves—his desires which are set on passion—will carry away that misguided man.

The channels run everywhere, the creeper of passion stands sprouting; if you see the creeper springing up, cut its root by means of knowledge.

A creature's pleasures are extravagant and luxurious; given up to pleasure and deriving happiness, men undergo again and again birth and decay.

Beset with lust, men run about like a snared hare; held in fetters and bonds, they undergo pain for a long time, again and again.

Beset with lust, men run about like a snared hare; let therefore the mendicant drive out thirst, by striving after passionlessness for himself.

He who, having got rid of the forest of lust (after having reached Nirvāna), gives himself over to forest-life (to lust), and who, when free from the forest (from lust), runs to the forest (to lust), look at that man! though free, he runs into bondage.

Wise people do not call that a strong fetter which is made of iron, wood, or hemp; passionately strong is the care for precious stones and rings, for sons and a wife.

That fetter wise people call strong which drags down, yields, but is difficult to undo; after having cut this at last, people leave the world, free from cares, and leaving the pleasures of love behind.

Those who are slaves to passions, run down the stream of desires, as

a spider runs down the web which he has made himself; when they have cut this, at last, wise people go onwards, free from cares, leaving all pain behind.

Give up what is before, give up what is behind, give up what is between, when thou goest to the other shore of existence; if thy mind is altogether free, thou will not again enter into birth and decay.

If a man is tossed about by doubts, full of strong passions, and yearning only for what is delightful, his thirst will grow more and more, and he will indeed make his fetters strong.

If a man delights in quieting doubts, and, always reflecting, dwells on what is not delightful, he certainly will remove, nay, he will cut the fetter of Māra.

He who has reached the consummation, who does not tremble, who is without thirst and without sin, he has broken all the thorns of life: this will be his last body.

He who is without thirst and without affection, who understands the words and their interpretation, who knows the order of letters (those which are before and which are after), he has received his last body, he is called the great sage, the great man.

"I have conquered all, I know all, in all conditions of life I am free from taint; I have left all, and through the destruction of thirst I am free; having learnt myself, whom should I indicate as my teacher?"

The gift of the law exceeds all gifts; the sweetness of the law exceeds all sweetness; the delight in the law exceeds all delights; the extinction of thirst overcomes all pain.

Riches destroy the foolish, if they look not for the other shore; the foolish by his thirst for riches destroys himself, as if he were destroying others.

The fields are damaged by weeds, mankind is damaged by passion: therefore a gift bestowed on the passionless brings great reward.

The fields are damaged by weeds, mankind is damaged by hatred: therefore a gift bestowed on those who do not hate brings great reward.

The fields are damaged by weeds, mankind is damaged by vanity: therefore a gift bestowed on those who are free from vanity brings great reward.

The fields are damaged by weeds, mankind is damaged by lust: therefore a gift bestowed on those who are free from lust brings great reward.

CHAPTER XXV: THE BHIKSHU[1]

RESTRAINT in the eye is good, good is restraint in the ear, in the nose restraint is good, good is restraint in the tongue.

In the body restraint is good, good is restraint in speech, in thought restraint is good, good is restraint in all things. A Bhikshu, restrained in all things, is freed from all pain.

He who controls his hand, he who controls his feet, he who controls his speech, he who is well controlled, he who delights inwardly, who is collected, who is solitary and content, him they call Bhikshu.

The Bhikshu who controls his mouth, who speaks wisely and calmly, who teaches the meaning and the law, his word is sweet.

He who dwells in the law, delights in the law, meditates on the law, recollects the law: that Bhikshu will never fall away from the true law.

Let him not despise what he has received, nor ever envy others: a mendicant who envies others does not obtain peace of mind.

A Bhikshu who, though he receives little, does not despise what he has received, even the gods will praise him, if his life is pure, and if he is not slothful.

He who never identifies himself with name and form, and does not grieve over what is no more, he indeed is called a Bhikshu.

The Bhikshu who behaves with kindness, who is happy in the doctrine of Buddha, will reach the quiet place (Nirvāna), happiness arising from the cessation of natural inclinations.

O Bhikshu, empty this boat! if emptied, it will go quickly; having cut off passion and hatred, thou wilt go to Nirvāna.

Cut off the five fetters, leave the five, rise above the five. A Bhikshu, who has escaped from the five fetters, he is called Oghatinna—"saved from the flood."

Meditate, O Bhikshu, and be not heedless! Do not direct thy thought to what gives pleasure, that thou mayest not for thy heedlessness have to swallow the iron ball in hell, and that thou mayest not cry out when burning, "This is pain."

Without knowledge there is no meditation, without meditation there is no knowledge: he who has knowledge and meditation is near unto Nirvāna.

A Bhikshu who has entered his empty house, and whose mind is tran-

[1] Monk, mendicant, a religious devotee.

quil, feels a more than human delight when he sees the law clearly.

As soon as he has considered the origin and destruction of the elements of the body, he finds happiness and joy which belong to those who know the immortal (Nirvāna).

And this is the beginning here for a wise Bhikshu: watchfulness over the senses, contentedness, restraint under the law; keep noble friends whose life is pure, and who are not slothful.

Let him live in charity, let him be perfect in his duties; then in the fulness of delight he will make an end of suffering.

As the Vassikā plant shed its withered flowers, men should shed passion and hatred, O ye Bhikshus!

The Bhikshu whose body and tongue and mind are quieted, who is collected, and has rejected the baits of the world, he is called quiet.

Rouse thyself by thyself, examine thyself by thyself, thus self-protected and attentive wilt thou live happily, O Bhikshu!

For self is the lord of self, self is the refuge of self; therefore curb thyself as the merchant curbs a noble horse.

The Bhikshu, full of delight, who is happy in the doctrine of Buddha will reach the quiet place (Nirvāna), happiness consisting in the cessation of natural inclinations.

He who, even as a young Bhikshu, applies himself to the doctrine of Buddha, brightens up this world, like the moon when free from clouds.

CHAPTER XXVI: THE BRĀHMANA[1]

STOP THE STREAM VALIANTLY, drive away the desires, O Brāhmana! When you have understood the destruction of all that was made, you will understand that which was not made.

If the Brāhmana has reached the other shore in both laws, in restraint and contemplation, all bonds vanish from him who has obtained knowledge.

He for whom there is neither the hither nor the further shore, nor both, him, the fearless and unshackled, I call indeed a Brāhmana.

He who is thoughtful, blameless, settled, dutiful, without passions, and who has attained the highest end, him I call indeed a Brāhmana.

The sun is bright by day, the moon shines by night, the warrior is bright in his armor, the Brāhmana is bright in his meditation; but Buddha, the Awakened, is bright with splendor day and night.

[1] Usually called "Brahmin" in English.

Because a man is rid of evil, therefore he is called Brāhmana; because he walks quietly, therefore he is called Samana; because he has sent away his own impurities, therefore he is called Pravragita (Pabbagita,[1] a pilgrim).

No one should attack a Brāhmana, but no Brāhmana, if attacked, should let himself fly at his aggressor! Woe to him who strikes a Brāhmana, more woe to him who flies at his aggressor!

It advantages a Brāhmana not a little if he holds his mind back from the pleasures of life; the more all wish to injure has vanished, the more all pain will cease.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who does not offend by body, word, or thought, and is controlled on these three points.

He from whom he may learn the law, as taught by the Well-awakened (Buddha), him let him worship assiduously, as the Brāhmana worships the sacrificial fire.

A man does not become a Brāhmana by his plaited hair, by his family, or by birth; in whom there is truth and righteousness, he is blessed, he is a Brāhmana.

What is the use of plaited hair, O fool! what of the raiment of goat-skins? Within thee there is ravening, but the outside thou makest clean.

The man who wears dirty raiments, who is emaciated and covered with veins, who meditates alone in the forest, him I call indeed a Brāhmana.

I do not call a man a Brāhmana because of his origin or of his mother. He is indeed arrogant, and he is wealthy: but the poor, who is free from all attachments, him I call indeed a Brāhmana.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who, after cutting all fetters, never trembles, is free from bonds and unshackled.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who, after cutting the strap and the thong, the rope with all that pertains to it, has destroyed all obstacles, and is awakened.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who, though he has committed no offence, endures reproach, stripes, and bonds: who has endurance for his force, and strength for his army.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who is free from anger, dutiful, virtuous, without appetites, who is subdued, and has received his last body.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who, does not cling to sensual pleasures, like water on a lotus leaf, like a mustard seed on the point of a needle.

[1] Pali for Sanskrit *Pravragita.*

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who, even here, knows the end of his own suffering, has put down his burden, and is unshackled.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana whose knowledge is deep, who possesses wisdom, who knows the right way and the wrong, and has attained the highest end.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who keeps aloof both from laymen and from mendicants, who frequents no houses, and has but few desires.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who without hurting any creatures, whether feeble or strong, does not kill nor cause slaughter.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who is tolerant with the intolerant, mild with the violent, and free from greed among the greedy.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana from whom anger and hatred, pride and hypocrisy have dropped like a mustard seed from the point of a needle.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who utters true speech, instructive and free from harshness, so that he offend no one.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who takes nothing in the world that is not given him, be it long or short, small or large, good or bad.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who fosters no desires for this world or for the next, has no inclinations, and is unshackled.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who has no interests, and when he has understood the truth, does not say How, how? and who has reached the depth of the Immortal.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who in this world has risen above both ties, good and evil, who is free from grief, from sin, and from impurity.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who is bright like the moon, pure, serene, undisturbed, and in whom all gayety is extinct.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who has traversed this miry road, the impassable world, difficult to pass, and its vanity, who has gone through, and reached the other shore, is thoughtful, steadfast, free from doubts, free from attachment, and content.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who in this world, having abandoned all desires, travels about without a home, and in whom all concupiscence is extinct.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who, having abandoned all longings, travels about without a home, and in whom all covetousness is extinct.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who, after leaving all bondage to men, his risen above all bondage to the gods, and is free from all and every bondage.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who has left what gives pleasure and what gives pain, who is cold, and free from all germs of renewed life: the hero who has conquered all the worlds.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who knows the destruction and the return of beings everywhere, who is free from bondage, welfaring (Sugata), and awakened (Buddha).

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana whose path the gods do not know, nor spirits (Gandharvas), nor men, whose passions are extinct, and who is an Arhat.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who calls nothing his own, whether it be before, behind, or between; who is poor, and free from the love of the world.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana, the manly, the noble, the hero, the great sage, the conqueror, the indifferent, the accomplished, the awakened.

Him I call indeed a Brāhmana who knows his former abodes, who sees heaven and hell, has reached the end of births, is perfect in knowledge, a sage, and whose perfections are all perfect.

Three Sermons by Buddha

INTRODUCTION

SOME CHRISTIANS may feel humiliated to find that the Buddhist teachings of love and mercy and kindness to fellowmen and animals, and particularly of not requiting evil with evil, stand on the same ethical height with the best of the Christian teachings. It may be a shock to learn that there is real truth even in revealed truth, and that that truth can be arrived at by independent human minds, or that there is something in the nature of human relationships and of this universe which calls for righteousness and mercy, apart from any special revelation. Yet it is undeniable that the hold of Buddhism upon its millions of believers rests not upon the desire to enter Nirvana, but upon the preaching of such common truths as gentleness and kindness, and that the charm of Buddha's personality is exactly that charm of gentleness and kindness.

To this day I cannot find out the differences in teachings of the Mormon Church from the non-Mormon sects except the claim of a special Revelation to its founder. So many different priestcrafts are trying to sell their particular brands of religion to the populace that only the claim to some "special patented process" can help to make the sale convincing. And so we come upon the curious phenomenon in religion that narrow-minded sectarianism is always a prominent feature of any religion of universal love. There is never a devout saint or believer in universal love who is not a "heretic" to some other believer, whether Christian or Buddhist. Tolstoi says somewhere that those who believe their religion is greater than God will believe that their sect is greater than their religion, and end up by believing that they are greater than their sect.

Consonant with my bias for Chinese sources, I have selected here the famous "Sermon at Benares" from *The Fo-Sho-Hing-Tsan-King,* a Life of Buddha by Asvaghosha, translated from the Sanskrit into Chinese by Dharmaraksha in A.D. 420 and from Chinese into English by Samuel Beal. This emphasizes the Middle Way, between extreme indulgence and extreme asceticism, with some sane comment on the wholesome mind in a wholesome body. It also contains a summary in bare outline of the basic Buddhist teachings concerning the "eightfold path," the existence of suffering, the cause of suffering, and the escape from suffering. The "Sermon on Abuse," which teaches requiting not evil with evil,[1] is taken from the *Sutra of Forty-two Sections,* probably the earliest Buddhist scripture to be translated into Chinese, soon after A.D. 67. Both are reproduced as edited or revised by Dr. Paul Carus. Finally I include the "Fire Sermon," from the *Mahā-Vagga* (translated by Henry Clarke Warren), referred to in T. S. Eliot's *Wasteland,* because it breathes something of the direct, impetuous fire of a prophet. But, as we shall see in the "Fire Sermon," there is one thing in Buddhism which can never convince the truly modern man, and that is the doctrine of the aversion for the body, taught in this Sermon, as well as elsewhere. So long as any religion teaches other-worldliness, I do not care whether it teaches a Heaven of Pearly Gates or a Nirvana. The body is not bad, that is all there is to it. The body is transient, but it is not bad. It goes through old age and death, but it is not bad. Our passions must be brought under control, but they are not bad in themselves. Our sense impressions are mere illusions, but they are not bad. This is the feeling of the modern man about the truth of the body.

[1] See also the parable of the Patient Elephant, *Gospel of Buddha,* p. 215, and the *Dhammapada.*

Three Sermons by Buddha

THE SERMON AT BENARES

ON SEEING THEIR OLD TEACHER approach, the five bhikkhus agreed among themselves not to salute him, nor to address him as a master, but by his name only. "For," so they said, "he has broken his vow and has abandoned holiness. He is no bhikkhu but Gotama, and Gotama has become a man who lives in abundance and indulges in the pleasures of worldliness."

But when the Blessed One approached in a dignified manner, they involuntarily rose from their seats and greeted him in spite of their resolution. Still they called him by his name and addressed him as "friend Gotama."

When they had thus received the Blessed One, he said: "Do not call the Tathāgata by his name nor address him as 'friend,' for he is the Buddha, the Holy One. The Buddha looks with a kind heart equally on all living beings, and they therefore call him 'Father.' To disrespect a father is wrong; to despise him, is wicked.

"The Tathāgata," the Buddha continued, "does not seek salvation in austerities, but neither does he for that reason indulge in worldly pleasures, nor live in abundance. The Tathāgata has found the middle path.

"There are two extremes, O bhikkhus, which the man who has given up the world ought not to follow—the habitual practice, on the one hand, of self-indulgence which is unworthy, vain and fit only for the worldly-minded—and the habitual practice, on the other hand, of self-mortification, which is painful, useless and unprofitable.

"Neither abstinence from fish or flesh, nor going naked, nor shaving the head, nor wearing matted hair, nor dressing in a rough garment,

nor covering oneself with dirt, nor sacrificing to Agni, will cleanse a man who is not free from delusions.

"Reading the Vedas, making offerings to priests, or sacrifices to the gods, self-mortification by heat or cold, and many such penances performed for the sake of immortality, these do not cleanse the man who is not free from delusions.

"Anger, drunkenness, obstinacy, bigotry, deception, envy, self-praise, disparaging others, superciliousness and evil intentions constitute uncleanness; not verily the eating of flesh.

"A middle path, O bhikkhus, avoiding the two extremes, has been discovered by the Tathāgata—a path which opens the eyes, and bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nirvāna!

"What is that middle path, O bhikkhus, avoiding these two extremes, discovered by the Tathāgata—that path which opens the eyes, and bestows understanding, which leads to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nirvāna?

"Let me teach you, O bhikkhus, the middle path, which keeps aloof from both extremes. By suffering, the emaciated devotee produces confusion and sickly thoughts in his mind. Mortification is not conducive even to worldly knowledge; how much less to a triumph over the senses!

"He who fills his lamp with water will not dispel the darkness, and he who tries to light a fire with rotten wood will fail. And how can any one be free from self by leading a wretched life, if he does not succeed in quenching the fires of lust, if he still hankers after either worldly or heavenly pleasures. But he in whom self has become extinct is free from lust; he will desire neither worldly nor heavenly pleasures, and the satisfaction of his natural wants will not defile him. However, let him be moderate, let him eat and drink according to the needs of the body.

"Sensuality is enervating; the self-indulgent man is a slave to his passions, and pleasure-seeking is degrading and vulgar.

"But to satisfy the necessities of life is not evil. To keep the body in good health is a duty, for otherwise we shall not be able to trim the lamp of wisdom, and keep our mind strong and clear. Water surrounds the lotus-flower, but does not wet its petals.

"This is the middle path, O bhikkhus, that keeps aloof from both extremes."

And the Blessed One spoke kindly to his disciples, pitying them for

their errors, and pointing out the uselessness of their endeavors, and the ice of ill-will that chilled their hearts melted away under the gentle warmth of the Master's persuasion.

Now the Blessed One set the wheel of the most excellent law rolling, and he began to preach to the five bhikkhus, opening to them the gate of immortality, and showing them the bliss of Nirvāna.

The Buddha said:

"The spokes of the wheel are the rules of pure conduct: justice is the uniformity of their length; wisdom is the tire; modesty and thoughtfulness are the hub in which the immovable axle of truth is fixed.

"He who recognizes the existence of suffering, its cause, its remedy, and its cessation has fathomed the four noble truths. He will walk in the right path.

"Right views will be the torch to light his way. Right aspirations will be his guide. Right speech will be his dwelling-place on the road. His gait will be straight, for it is right behavior. His refreshments will be the right way of earning his livelihood. Right efforts will be his steps: right thoughts his breath; and right contemplation will give him the peace that follows in his footprints.

"Now, this, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning suffering:

"Birth is attended with pain, decay is painful, disease is painful, death is painful. Union with the unpleasant is painful, painful is separation from the pleasant; and any craving that is unsatisfied, that too is painful. In brief, bodily conditions which spring from attachment are painful.

"This, then, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning suffering.

"Now this, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the origin of suffering:

"Verily, it is that craving which causes the renewal of existence, accompanied by sensual delight, seeking satisfaction now here, now there, the craving for the gratification of the passions, the craving for a future life, and the craving for happiness in this life.

"This, then, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the origin of suffering.

"Now this, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the destruction of suffering:

"Verily, it is the destruction, in which no passion remains, of this very thirst; it is the laying aside of, the being free from, the dwelling no longer upon this thirst.

"This, then, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the destruction of suffering.

"Now this, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the way which leads to the destruction of sorrow. Verily! it is this noble eightfold path; that is to say:

"Right views; right aspirations; right speech; right behavior; right livelihood; right effort; right thoughts; and right contemplation.

"This, then, O bhikkhus, is the noble truth concerning the destruction of sorrow.

"By the practice of lovingkindness I have attained liberation of heart, and thus I am assured that I shall never return in renewed births. I have even now attained Nirvāna."

And when the Blessed One had thus set the royal chariot wheel of truth rolling onward, a rapture thrilled through all the universes.

The devas left their heavenly abodes to listen to the sweetness of the truth; the saints that had parted from life crowded around the great teacher to receive the glad tidings; even the animals of the earth felt the bliss that rested upon the words of the Tathāgata: and all the creatures of the host of sentient beings, gods, men, and beasts, hearing the message of deliverance, received and understood it in their own language.

And when the doctrine was propounded, the venerable Kondanna, the oldest one among the five bhikkhus, discerned the truth with his mental eye, and he said: "Truly, O Buddha, our Lord, thou hast found the truth!" Then the other bhikkhus too, joined him and exclaimed: "Truly, thou art the Buddha, thou hast found the truth."

And the devas and saints and all the good spirits of the departed generations that had listened to the sermon of the Tathāgata, joyfully received the doctrine and shouted: "Truly, the Blessed One has founded the kingdom of righteousness. The Blessed One has moved the earth; he has set the wheel of Truth rolling, which by no one in the universe, be he god or man, can ever be turned back. The kingdom of Truth will be preached upon earth; it will spread; and righteousness, good-will, and peace will reign among mankind."

THE SERMON ON ABUSE

And the Blessed One observed the ways of society and noticed how much misery came from malignity and foolish offences done only to gratify vanity and self-seeking pride.

And the Buddha said: "If a man foolishly does me wrong, I will return to him the protection of my ungrudging love; the more evil comes from him, the more good shall go from me; the fragrance of goodness always comes to me, and the harmful air of evil goes to him."

A foolish man learning that the Buddha observed the principle of great love which commends the return of good for evil, came and abused him. The Buddha was silent, pitying his folly.

When the man had finished his abuse, the Buddha asked him, saying: "Son, if a man declined to accept a present made to him, to whom would it belong?" And he answered: "In that case it would belong to the man who offered it."

"My son," said the Buddha, "thou hast railed at me, but I decline to accept thy abuse, and request thee to keep it thyself. Will it not be a source of misery to thee? As the echo belongs to the sound, and the shadow to the substance, so misery will overtake the evil-doer without fail."

The abuser made no reply, and Buddha continued:

"A wicked man who reproaches a virtuous one is like one who looks up and spits at heaven; the spittle soils not the heaven, but comes back and defiles his own person.

"The slanderer is like one who flings dust at another when the wind is contrary; the dust does but return on him who threw it. The virtuous man cannot be hurt and the misery that the other would inflict comes back on himself."

The abuser went away ashamed, but he came again and took refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha.[1]

THE FIRE SERMON

THEN THE BLESSED ONE, having dwelt in Uruvelā as long as he wished, proceeded on his wanderings in the direction of Gayā Head, accompanied by a great congregation of priests, a thousand in number, who had all of them aforetime been monks with matted hair. And there in Gayā Head, the Blessed One dwelt, together with the thousand priests.

And there the Blessed One addressed the priests:

"All things, O priests, are on fire. And what, O priests, are all these things which are on fire?

[1] *Dharma*, the Law of the Path of Buddhist teachings; *Sangha*, the Buddhist Church. These, with Buddha, constitute the "three refuges."

"The eye, O priests, is on fire; forms are on fire; eye-consciousness is on fire; impressions received by the eye are on fire; and whatever sensation, pleasant or unpleasant, or indifferent, originates in dependence on impressions received by the fire, that also is on fire.

"And with what are these on fire?

"With the fire of passion, say I, with the fire of hatred, with the fire of infatuation; with birth, old age, death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief, and despair are they on fire.

"The ear is on fire; sounds are on fire; . . . the nose is on fire; odors are on fire; . . . the tongue is on fire; tastes are on fire; . . . the body is on fire; things tangible are on fire; . . . the mind is on fire; ideas are on fire; . . . mind-consciousness is on fire; impressions received by the mind are on fire; and whatever sensation, pleasant or unpleasant, or indifferent, originates in dependence on impressions received by the mind, that also is on fire.

"And with what are these on fire?

"With the fire of passion, say I, with the fire of hatred, with the fire of infatuation; with birth, old age, death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief, and despair are they on fire.

"Perceiving this, O priests, the learned and noble disciple conceives an aversion for the eye, conceives an aversion for forms, conceives an aversion for eye-consciousness, conceives an aversion for impressions received by the eye; and whatever sensation, pleasant or unpleasant, or indifferent, originates in dependence on impressions received by the eye, for that also he conceives an aversion. Conceives an aversion for the ear, conceives an aversion for sounds . . . conceives an aversion for the nose, conceives an aversion for odors . . . conceives an aversion for the tongue, conceives an aversion for tastes . . . conceives an aversion for the body, conceives an aversion for things tangible . . . conceives an aversion for the mind, conceives an aversion for ideas, conceives an aversion for mind-consciousness, conceives an aversion for the impressions received by the mind; and whatever sensation, pleasant or unpleasant, or indifferent, originates in dependence on impressions received by the mind, for this also he conceives an aversion. And in conceiving this aversion, he becomes divested of passion, and by the absence of passion he becomes free, and when he is free, he becomes aware that he is free; and he knows that rebirth is exhausted, that he has lived the holy life, that he has done what behooved him to do, and that he is no more for this world."

Some Buddhist Parables and Legends

INTRODUCTION

THAT AESOP'S FABLES originated from India,[1] is proved by the whole character of Hindu literature, in which the instinct for the fable abounds. The *Panchatantra,* the *Hitopadesa,* the Buddhist *Jātaka* (fables and stories of Buddhist previous lives, technically called "birth-stories," in which Buddha was born as a snake, or an elephant, etc.), and Buddhaghosha's Commentary on the *Dhammapada*[2] all attest to this truth. In Buddhaghosha's Commentary, a story, or sometimes several stories, are told to illustrate each of the 423 ethical epigrams of the *Dhammapada,* with which the story always ends in Aesop fashion.

In the following selections may be found one of the best wedding sermons and one of the best funeral sermons I have ever come across. The story of *Kisā Gotamī,* which tells a great truth in a simple story, is one of the best in the whole Buddhist literature, and its introduction transports us to the magic world of the *Arabian Nights.* Its subject is none other than Death.

The *Marriage Feast in Jambūnada* illustrates many striking parallels between the Buddhist and Christian Gospels, as also does the following story of *Following the Master over the Stream.* The first is taken from the Chinese Life of Buddha, *Fo Pen Hsing Chi Ching,* tr. by Samuel Beal, while the second is taken from the Chinese Dhammapada, *Texts*

[1] See Introduction to *Panchatantra.*

[2] Translated by E. W. Burlingame, *"Buddhist Legends,"* Harvard Oriental Series, Vols. 28, 29 & 30. Also *Buddhaghosha's Parables,* translated by T. Rogers, London, 1870.

from the Buddhist Canon, tr. by Beal. The above three stories are reproduced as arranged by Dr. Paul Carus in *The Gospel of Buddha* (Open Court). For another striking parallel, see the story of the lost son who returned to his father's house as a common laborer, in *Gospel of Buddha,* by Paul Carus, p. 182.

The *Greedy Monk* from the *Dhammapada* Commentary illustrates the same technique of enclosing a tale within a tale, characteristic of the *Panchatantra.* The story of *Ocean-of-Beauty,* from the same collection, contains some remarks about womanhood which shows the New York lady in an apartment flat has nothing to teach the Hindu women in methods of attracting a man. The translation is by Eugene Watson Burlingame.

Some Buddhist Parables and Legends

KISĀ GOTAMĪ

THERE WAS A RICH MAN who found his gold suddenly transformed into ashes; and he took to his bed and refused all food. A friend, hearing of his sickness, visited the rich man and learned the cause of his grief. And the friend said: "Thou didst not make good use of thy wealth. When thou didst hoard it up it was not better than ashes. Now heed my advice. Spread mats in the bazaar; pile up these ashes, and pretend to trade with them."

The rich man did as his friend had told him; and when his neighbors asked him, "Why sellest thou ashes?" he said: "I offer my goods for sale."

After some time a young girl, named Kisā Gotamī, an orphan and very poor, passed by, and seeing the rich man in the bazaar, said: "My lord, why pilest thou thus up gold and silver for sale."

And the rich man said: "Wilt thou please hand me that gold and silver?" And Kisā Gotamī took up a handful of ashes, and lo! they changed back into gold.

Considering that Kisā Gotamī had the mental eye of spiritual knowledge and saw the real worth of things, the rich man gave her in marriage to his son, and he said: "With many, gold is no better than ashes, but with Kisā Gotamī ashes become pure gold."

And Kisā Gotamī had an only son, and he died. In her grief she carried the dead child to all her neighbors, asking them for medicine, and the people said: "She has lost her senses. The boy is dead."

At length Kisā Gotamī met a man who replied to her request: "I cannot give thee medicine for thy child, but I know a physician who can."

And the girl said: "Pray tell me, sir; who is it?" And the man replied: "Go to Sakyamuni, the Buddha."

Kisā Gotamī repaired to the Buddha and cried: "Lord and Master, give me the medicine that will cure my boy."

The Buddha answered: "I want a handful of mustard-seed." And when the girl in her joy promised to procure it, the Buddha added: "The mustard-seed must be taken from a house where no one has lost a child, husband, parent, or friend."

Poor Kisā Gotamī now went from house to house, and the people pitied her and said: "Here is mustard-seed; take it!" But when she asked, "Did a son or daughter, a father or mother, die in your family?" they answered her: "Alas! the living are few, but the dead are many. Do not remind us of our deepest grief." And there was no house but some beloved one had died in it.

Kisā Gotamī became weary and hopeless, and sat down at the wayside, watching the lights of the city, as they flickered up and were extinguished again. At last the darkness of the night reigned everywhere. And she considered the fate of men, that their lives flicker up and are extinguished. And she thought to herself: "How selfish am I in my grief! Death is common to all; yet in this valley of desolation there is a path that leads him to immortality who has surrendered all selfishness."

Putting away the selfishness of her affection for her child, Kisā Gotamī had the dead body buried in the forest. Returning to the Buddha, she took refuge in him and found comfort in the Dharma, which is a balm that will soothe all the pains of our troubled hearts.

The Buddha said:

"The life of mortals in this world is troubled and brief and combined with pain. For there is not any means by which those that have been born can avoid dying; after reaching old age there is death; of such a nature are living beings.

"As ripe fruits are early in danger of falling, so mortals when born are always in danger of death.

"As all earthen vessels made by the potter end in being broken, so is the life of mortals.

"Both young and adult, both those who are fools and those who are wise, all fall into the power of death; all are subject to death.

"Of those who, overcome by death, depart from life, a father cannot save his son, nor kinsmen their relations.

"Mark! while relatives are looking on and lamenting deeply, one by one mortals are carried off, like an ox that is led to the slaughter.

"So the world is afflicted with death and decay, therefore the wise do not grieve, knowing the terms of the world.

"In whatever manner people think a thing will come to pass, it is often different when it happens, and great is the disappointment; see, such are the terms of the world.

"Not from weeping nor from grieving will any one obtain peace of mind; on the contrary, his pain will be the greater and his body will suffer. He will make himself sick and pale, yet the dead are not saved by his lamentation.

"People pass away, and their fate after death will be according to their deeds.

"If a man live a hundred years, or even more, he will at last be separated from the company of his relatives, and leave the life of this world.

"He who seeks peace should draw out the arrow of lamentation, and complaint, and grief.

"He who has drawn out the arrow and has become composed will obtain peace of mind; he who has overcome all sorrow will become free from sorrow, and be blessed."

THE MARRIAGE-FEAST IN JAMBŪNADA

THERE WAS A MAN in Jambūnada who was to be married the next day, and he thought, "Would that the Buddha, the Blessed One, might be present at the wedding."

And the Blessed One passed by his house and met him, and when he read the silent wish in the heart of the bridegroom, he consented to enter.

When the Holy One appeared with the retinue of his many bhikkhus, the host whose means were limited received them as best he could, saying: "Eat, my Lord, and all thy congregation, according to your desire."

While the holy men ate, the meats and drinks remained undiminished, and the host thought to himself: "How wondrous is this! I should have had plenty for all my relatives and friends. Would that I had invited them all."

When this thought was in the host's mind, all his relatives and friends

entered the house; and although the hall in the house was small there was room in it for all of them. They sat down at the table and ate, and there was more than enough for all of them.

The Blessed One was pleased to see so many guests full of good cheer and he quickened them and gladdened them with words of truth, proclaiming the bliss of righteousness:

"The greatest happiness which a mortal man can imagine is the bond of marriage that ties together two loving hearts. But there is a greater happiness still: it is the embrace of truth. Death will separate husband and wife, but death will never affect him who has espoused the truth.

"Therefore be married unto the truth and live with the truth in holy wedlock. The husband who loves his wife and desires for a union that shall be everlasting must be faithful to her so as to be like truth itself, and she will rely upon him and revere him and minister unto him. And the wife who loves her husband and desires a union that shall be everlasting must be faithful to him so as to be like truth itself; and he will place his trust in her, he will provide for her. Verily, I say unto you, their children will become like unto their parents and will bear witness to their happiness.

"Let no man be single, let every one be wedded in holy love to the truth. And when Māra, the destroyer, comes to separate the visible forms of your being, you will continue to live in the truth, and you will partake of the life everlasting, for the truth is immortal."

There was no one among the guests but was strengthened in his spiritual life, and recognized the sweetness of a life of righteousness; and they took refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha.

FOLLOWING THE MASTER OVER THE STREAM

South of Sāvatthi is a great river, on the banks of which lay a hamlet of five hundred houses. Thinking of the salvation of the people, the World-honored One resolved to go to the village and preach the doctrine. Having come to the riverside he sat down beneath a tree, and the villagers seeing the glory of his appearance approached him with reverence; but when he began to preach, they believed him not.

When the world-honored Buddha had left Sāvatthi, Sāriputta felt a desire to see the Lord and to hear him preach. Coming to the river where the water was deep and the current strong, he said to himself: "This stream shall not prevent me. I shall go and see the Blessed One," and he

stepped upon the water which was as firm under his feet as a slab of granite.

When he arrived at a place in the middle of the stream where the waves were high, Sāriputta's heart gave way, and he began to sink. But rousing his faith and renewing his mental effort, he proceeded as before and reached the other bank.

The people of the village were astonished to see Sāriputta, and they asked how he could cross the stream where there was neither a bridge nor a ferry.

And Sāriputta replied: "I lived in ignorance until I heard the voice of the Buddha. As I was anxious to hear the doctrine of salvation, I crossed the river and I walked over its troubled waters because I had faith. Faith, nothing else, enabled me to do so, and now I am here in the bliss of the Master's presency."

The World-honored One added: "Sāriputta, thou hast spoken well. Faith like thine alone can save the world from the yawning gulf of migration and enable men to walk dryshod to the other shore."

And the Blessed One urged to the villagers the necessity of ever advancing in the conquest of sorrow and of casting off all shackles so as to cross the river of worldliness and attain deliverance from death.

Hearing the words of the Tathāgata, the villagers were filled with joy and believing in the doctrines of the Blessed One embraced the five rules and took refuge in his name.

THE GREEDY MONK

THE STORY GOES that the Elder, who was skilled to teach the Law, after listening to a discourse on the subject of being satisfied with but little, accepted a large number of robes with which several monks who had taken upon themselves the Pure Practices honored him, and besides took all the utensils which they had left and carried them off with him. As the season of the rains was near at hand, he went off into the country. He stopped at a certain monastery to preach the Law, and the novices and probationers liked the way he talked so well that they said to him, "Spend the rainy season here, Reverend Sir." "What allowance is made to a monk who spends the season of rains here?" asked the Elder. "A single cloak," was the reply. The Elder left his shoes there and went to the next monastery. When he reached the second monastery, he asked the same question, "What allowance is made here?" "Two cloaks," was the reply.

There he left his walking stick. Then he went to the third monastery and asked the same question, "What is the allowance made here?" "Three cloaks," was the reply. There he left his water-pot.

Then he went to the fourth monastery and asked the same question, "What is the allowance made here?" "Four cloaks," was the reply. "Very good," said the Elder, "I will take my residence here"; and there he went into residence. And he preached the Law to the laymen and the monks who resided there so well that they honored him with a great number of garments and robes. When he had completed residence, he sent a message to all the other monasteries, saying, "I left my requisites behind me, and must have whatever is required for residence; pray send them to me." When he gathered all of his possessions together, he put them in a cart and continued his journey.

Now at a certain monastery two young monks who had received two cloaks and a single blanket found it impossible to make a division satisfactory to both of them, and therefore settled themselves beside the road and began to quarrel, saying, "You may have two cloaks, but the blanket belongs to me." When they saw the Elder approaching, they said, "Reverend Sir, you make a fair decision and give us what you think fit." "Will you abide by my decision?" "Yes indeed; we will abide by your decision." "Very good, then." So the Elder divided the two cloaks between the two monks; then he said to them, "This blanket should be worn only by us who preach the law"; and when he had thus said, he shouldered the costly blanket and went off with it.

Disgusted and disappointed, the two young monks went to the Teacher and reported the whole occurrence to him. Said the Teacher, "This is not the first time he has taken what belongs to you and left you disgusted and disappointed; he did the same thing also in a previous state of existence." And he related the following:

The Otters and the Jackal

Once upon a time, long, long ago, two otters named Anutīracārī and Gambhīracārī, caught a big redfish and fell to quarreling over it, saying, "The head belongs to me; you may have the tail." Unable to effect a division satisfactory to both of them, catching sight of a certain jackal, they appealed to him for a decision, saying, "Uncle, you make such a division of this fish as you think proper and render an award." Said the jackal, "I have been appointed judge by the king, and am obliged to sit in court for hours at a time; I came out here merely to stretch my legs; I

have no time now for such business." "Uncle, don't say that, make a division and render an award." "Will you abide by my decision?" "Yes indeed, uncle, we will abide by your decision." "Very good, then," said the jackal. The jackal cut the head and laid that aside, then cut off the tail and laid that aside. When he had done so, he said to them, "Friends, that one of you who runs along the bank (Anutīracārī) shall have the tail, and that one of you who runs in deep water (Gambhīracārī) shall have the head; as for this middle portion, however, this shall be mine, inasmuch as I am justice." And to make them see the matter in better light, he pronounced the following Stanza,

Anutīracārī shall have the tail, and Gambhīracārī shall have the head;
But as for this middle portion, it shall belong to the justice.

Having pronounced this Stanza, the jackal picked up the middle portion of the fish and went off with it. As for the otters, they were filled with disgust and disappointment, and stood and eyed the jackal as he went away.

When the Teacher finished this Story of the Past, he said, "And thus it was that in times long past this Elder filled you with disgust and disappointment." Then the Teacher consoled these monks and rebuked Upananda, saying, "Monks, a man who admonishes others should first direct himself in the way he should go." And when he had thus spoken, he pronounced the following Stanza,

A man should first direct himself in the way he should go.
Only then should he instruct others; a wise man will do so and not grow weary.[1]

A COURTESAN TEMPTS THE MONK OCEAN-OF-BEAUTY

At Sāvatthi, we are told, in a great household possessing forty crores[2] of treasure, was reborn a certain youth of station named Ocean-of-Beauty, Sundarasamudda Kumāra. One day after daybreak, seeing a great company of people carrying perfumes and garlands in their hands, going to Jetavana to hear the Law, he asked, "Where are you going?" "To the teacher to hear the Law," they replied. "I will go too," said he, and accompanying them, sat down on the outer circle of the congregation. The

[1] This verse is from the *Dhammapada*, of which the story is told as a "commentary."
[2] Ten millions.

Teacher, knowing the thoughts of his heart, preached the Law in orderly sequence. Thought Ocean-of-Beauty, "It is impossible to live the life of a householder and at the same time live the Life of Holiness, whereof a polished shell is the image and likeness."

The Teacher's discourse made him eager to retire from the world. Therefore, as the congregation departed, he asked the Teacher to admit him to the order. Said the Teacher, "The Tathāgatas admit no one to the Order who has not obtained permission of his mother and father." So Ocean-of-Beauty went home, and so like youth Ratthapāla and others, by dint of great effort, prevailed upon his mother and father to give him permission to enter the Order. Having obtained their permission, he retired from the world and was admitted to the Order by the Teacher. Subsequently he made his full profession as member of the Order. Then he thought to himself, "What is the use of my living here?" So departing from Jetavana, he went to Rājagaha and spent his time going his rounds for alms.

Now one day there was a festival at Sāvatthi, and on that day Ocean-of-Beauty's mother and father saw their son's playfellows diverting themselves amid great splendor and magnificence. Thereupon they began to weep and lament, saying, "This is past our son's getting now." At that moment a certain courtesan came to the house, and seeing his mother as she sat weeping, asked her, "Mother, why do you weep?" "I keep thinking of my son; that is why I weep." "But, Mother, where is he?" "Among the monks, retired from the world." "Would it not be proper to make him return to the world?" "Yes, indeed; but he doesn't wish to do that. He has left Sāvatthi and gone to Rājagaha." "Suppose I were to succeed in making him return to the world; what would you do for me?" "We would make you mistress of all the wealth of this household." "Very well, give me my expenses." And taking the amount of her expenses, she surrounded herself with a large retinue and went to Rājagaha.

Taking note of the street in which the Elder was accustomed to make his rounds for alms, she obtained a house in this street and took her abode therein. And early in the morning she prepared choice food, and when the Elder entered the street to make his round for alms, she gave him alms. After a few days had passed, she said to him, "Reverend Sir, sit down right here and eat your meal." So saying, she offered to take the bowl, and the Elder yielded his bowl willingly. Then she served him with choice food, and having so done, said to him, "Reverend Sir, right here is the most delightful spot to which you could come on your rounds

for alms." For a few days she enticed him to sit on the veranda, and there provided him with choice food.

Next she won the favor of some small boys by treating them with cakes, and said to them, "See here, boys; when the Elder comes to the house, you come too. And when you come, kick up the dust. And even if I tell you to stop, pay no attention to what I say." So on the following day, while the Elder was eating his meal, the boys came to the house and kicked up the dust. And when the mistress of the house told them to stop, they paid no attention to what she said. On the next day she said to the Elder, "Reverend Sir, these boys keep coming here and kicking up the dust, and, even when I tell them to stop, pay no attention to what I say; sit inside of the house." For a few days she seated him inside of the house and there provided him with choice food. Then she treated the boys again and said to them, "Boys, while the Elder is eating his meal, make a loud noise. And even if I tell you to stop, pay no attention to what I say." The boys did as they were told.

On the following day she said to the Elder, "Reverend Sir, the noise in this place is unbearable. In spite of all I do to stop them, these boys pay no attention to what I say; sit on the upper floor of the mansion." The Elder gave his consent. She then climbed to the top of the mansion, making the Elder precede her, and closing the door after her. Now the Elder had taken upon himself the strict obligation to receive alms only by making an unbroken round from door to door. But in spite of this fact, so firmly bound was he by the bonds of the craving of taste that he complied with her suggestion and climbed to the topmost floor of the seven-storied mansion. The woman provided the Elder with a seat.

In forty ways, friend Punnamukha, does a woman accost a man: She yawns, she bows down, she makes amorous gestures, she pretends to be abashed, she rubs the nails of one hand or foot with the nails of the other hand or foot, she places one foot on another foot, she scratches on the ground with a stick. She causes her boy to leap up, she causes her boy to leap down, she dallies with her boy and makes him dally with her, she kisses him and makes him kiss her, she eats food and makes him eat food, she gives and begs for gifts, she imitates whatever he does. She talks in a loud tone, she talks in a low tone; she talks as in public, she talks as in private. While dancing, singing, playing musical instruments, weeping, making amorous gestures, adorning herself, she laughs and looks. She sways her hips, she jiggles her waist-gear, uncovers her thigh, covers her thigh, displays her breast, displays her armpit, and displays her navel.

She buries the pupils of her eyes, lifts her eyebrows, scratches her lips, and dangles her tongue. She takes off her loin-cloth, puts on her loin-cloth, takes off her turban, and puts on her turban.

Thus did that woman employ all the devices of a woman, all the graces of a woman. And standing before the Elder, she recited the following Stanza,

> Dyed in lac and clad in slippers are the feet of a harlot.
> You are young and you are mine; I am young and I am yours.
> We will both retire from the world later on, and lean on a staff.

Thought the Elder, "Alas! I have committed a grievous sin! I did not consider what I was doing." And he was deeply moved. At that moment the Teacher, although seated within Jetavana, forty-five leagues distant, saw the whole affair and smiled. Elder Ananda asked him, "Reverend Sir, what is the cause, what is the occasion of your smiling?" "Ananda, in the city of Rājagaha, on the topmost floor of a seven-storied palace, there is a battle on between the monk Ocean-of-Beauty and a harlot." "Who is going to win, Reverend Sir, and who is going to lose?" The Teacher replied, "Ananda, Ocean-of-Beauty is going to win, and the harlot is going to lose." Having thus proclaimed that the Elder would win the victory, the Teacher, remaining seated where he was, sent forth a luminous image of himself and said, "Monk, renounce both lusts and free yourself from desire." So saying, he pronounced the following Stanza,

Whoever in this world renounces lusts, whoever abandons the house life and retires from the world,
Whoever has extinguished the essence of lust, such a man I call a Brahman.[1]

[1] This verse is in the *Dhammapada,* of which the story is told as a "commentary."

PRESIDENT'S SECRETARIAT
LIBRARY.

Accn. No....201.....

1. Books may be retained for a period not exceeding fifteen days.